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THE ENGLISH REVIEW
AUGUST, 1935

Our Own Times*

By Douglas Jerrold

WHAT manner of men are we, to what destiny do we march, and how far have we come on the road? Such, broadly, are the questions which men ask themselves to-day, as in all periods of transition, when the old ways seem vain and the new hard to discover. Commander King-Hall has no doubt about the answer, but, if his book—"Our own Times"—is a fair guide, he seems strangely uninterested in the question. He seems, indeed, almost unaware of the force and gravity of such a criticism of modern economic materialism as is implied in a recent observation of M. Jaques Maritain, when he remarked that, "One who makes it his first principle to advance with the times, or to make the times advance and to march in step, binds himself in so doing to collaborate with all the agents of change. He lands himself in very mixed company."

The central thesis of the first volume of "Our Own Times" is the collapse of the pre-war international economic order. The attack on this began on August 4th 1914, and ended in the departure of Great Britain from the gold standard in 1931. This judgment does not, however, arise from the facts, but is rather the searchlight which the author turns on the facts. Had he written "Our Own Times" in 1906, he would, with his gift for appraising the situation as it is, have been first to subject the appearances of our international economic order to very critical examination. Between 1900 and 1913 the English overseas investments increased from £2,000 millions to £4,000 millions, and by 1914 the total overseas loans of

* "Our Own Times" by Stephen King-Hall (Ivor Nicholson and Watson. 2 vols. 25s. net).

the four great powers amounted to £7,590 millions. Real wages, however, fell during the same period in England by 6 per cent., and by more on the Continent, nor was the world yet face to face with the results of the enterprises of the small group of nations who had assumed the rôle of financial entrepreneurs to Australasia, South America and the East. Nor would the author have omitted to note that, from the shores of the English Channel to the Ural mountains, Europe in 1913 was still predominantly a continent of peasants, while even in the United States as late as the beginning of the century William Jennings Bryan could address a national appeal and find the inspiration of a cause in the yeoman farmer and the keeper of the cross-road stores not yet subordinated to the bankers and the chain-stores proprietors. It was indeed England alone that presented the spectacle in 1913 of a completely urbanized economic internationalism based on free money, profitless labour, and naval supremacy. The judgment which sees in the years from 1913 to 1931 the collapse of a thing called economic prosperity at the hands of a thing called nationalism is surely too facile. It was an order based on usury and the usurers fell out among themselves. But it was the usury, not the quarrels of the usurers which destroyed the system.

Commander King-Hall observes that our return to gold in 1924 was an "attempt to force down and fix the financial side of international economic relations into something resembling the 1913 framework." But he is not content with that bald statement. He calls it "a great attempt," and though he sees very clearly how and why the attempt failed, he condones it. It is, as he says, easy to be wise after the event. But it is better to be wise after the event than foolish after as well as before it. Nor does he quite do justice to the great volume of opinion, political, financial, and industrial, which was all along opposed to the policy and prophesied its results before they occurred. He is perhaps hypnotized by his

assumption of the orderliness of the pre-war order, which was in fact only saved from collapse by the successive gold discoveries in Australia, California and the Rand and by the turn of the capitalist entrepreneurs at the end of the nineteenth century from the task of opening up new sources of food and raw materials to the task of industrializing the new countries—a task of which the economic results, intensified and very greatly expedited by the war itself, faced England, France, Germany and America for the first time only in the year 1920.

The world was thus confronted with two simultaneous but essentially unrelated problems—the industrialization of vast territories which had hitherto existed, as economic units, mainly as satellites to the financial centres of London, Paris and New York, and the mountainous debt structure created by the war, super-imposed on a system which had already laid too heavy a load on posterity.

The pre-war financial system aimed at the stability of the Gold Exchanges through the control of internal prices. This system was already before the war leading to disequilibrium owing to inability of prices to rise sufficiently to sustain the already growing burden of capital indebtedness. The main effort of the financial centres was necessarily directed to maintaining the value of the different currencies in terms of gold; the consequences of this effort was a fall in real wages in the first years of the century and the rapid growth of labour and socialist movements all over the world. The policy of the return to gold was, not in its intention but in its effect, an attack on wages in the interests of a revaluation of the currency which must carry with it the revaluation of the debts of the whole world. In England, the most peaceful and secure of the Great Powers, the immediate result was the first serious revolutionary challenge to our social order for many centuries. The ultimate result, the world over, was a mere fiasco, ending in the repudiation of all international war and reparations obligations, the devaluation of all currencies

and the feverish efforts to defend the devaluated currencies against competitive devaluation, by tariffs, quotas and import prohibitions.

These last were, as Commander King-Hall describes, also called into play to protect the almost universal re-orientation of industry in face of the world-wide industrialization. He seems, however, too inclined to regard this re-orientation as in itself retrograde, and attaches more weight than many would do to the theory of "horses for courses." Is it really true that, under modern conditions, specialization in production among the different nations is economically desirable. Under such a system the highest standard of living would be enjoyed by the nations richest in natural resources, native skill, thrift and industry; if the world adopted this system (and in proportion as it approached it), we should find ourselves engaged in a competition of low wages and longer hours to which Commander King-Hall's party would put a stop in its very early stages. Science has so equalized natural resources and native skill that wages and hours would be the main competitive items in a world dedicated to free exchange. Such a world in fact has never existed, and no one is better fitted by his genius for realism than Commander King-Hall to realize that it never will.

This quality of realism, and the defects of the method, are well demonstrated in the second volume of "Our Own Times," which carries the world's story through the years 1931 to 1934.

For instance, this passage on the League :—

"It has sometimes seemed to the author of this book that if one could turn the pages of history and find oneself in 1920 with the advantages of a knowledge of events to come, then a good deal could have been said in favour of establishing the League as primarily an organ for technical and economic international co-operation rather than one for political co-operation."

In the thousand odd pages of these two volumes, there

are few judgments based on facts which are not equally shrewd, clear and courageous. But why, we are bound to ask, wait till 1934 to reach a conclusion equally easily reached in 1920? The world has not changed; human nature has not changed; nothing unexpected has happened to the League since 1920. The League is an association of sovereign states who have behaved as the logic of history, tradition, sentiment and necessity has dictated to them. Commander King-Hall accepts the nineteenth-century assumption that nationalism is a step on the road to internationalism and that the road is a good one because it is the road of evolution. But it is just this fundamental assumption which requires examination. The process of history is not one of trial and error. Nations and civilization get no second chances, and the normal course of political evolution is for that reason not "up and up" but up and then down. The world is to-day at the very edge of catastrophe, provoked by the errors of a false philosophy. Nationalism is not a stage of political evolution but a disease of nationality, which is a subtle compromise between the claims of race and the claims of government and can no more be perverted into internationalism than into imperialism without disaster. This is inherent in the nature of men and things, and the present wise evolution of England and her Dominions into an association of nations is wise and noble because it is in accordance with the fundamental requirements of human nature. Once we approach the problems of world government from the correct sociological premisses, instead of surveying them, in the fashion of the mediæval scientists, in the light of fixed principles which are only unscientific guesses, we find that most of the problems of international politics are in reality not problems at all. There is no law of nature or of God which makes national boundaries sacred. The collective personality—the race—has its rights—the individual has his secular needs—security, order and justice, all alike determined to the end of his own freedom. These rights

have to be harmonized. Not only is there no virtue in the *status quo* as such, but there is, in a world wracked by the passions and ruined by the follies of men, a positive absence of virtue. Wounds must be healed. Non-interference is as sensible a motto for a statesman as for a doctor, and grafting or amputation may be as necessary in politics as in medicine. We may, indeed, carry the analogy further. To-day, in medicine as in politics, people are searching for panaceas. Everything can be cured by bone manipulation, by starvation, by faith, or by herbs. It is the modern form of the search for the elixir of life—the modern heresy which will not tolerate the idea of the essential imperfection of things and men. It is the inevitable psychological result of the loss of faith in the old gods. If there is no hereafter, perfection must be here: mortal man cannot be born to suffer. Only those who know and seek God can face such a fate. And so with politics in the world to-day. Alone among the great societies, the British Empire seems still to preserve to some small extent the secret of equilibrium, retracting liberties here, increasing them there, here asserting sovereignty, there resigning it, not in accordance with any obscurantist principles but with the strict needs of the case. But the disease of the modern mind has attacked the English as well. Like the rest of the world, our town-bred political classes are getting tired of facing the fact that the preservation of equilibrium is the reward of constant and wise effort in the face of inherent tendencies to disequilibrium; that there is no simple formula for the government of men or the ordering of affairs; that short cuts like internationalism or self-determination, national planning or individualism, are not merely bad politics, but a denial of the need for politics, a denial of the essential antinomies between race and government, freedom and order, the welfare of the society and the personality of the individual, on the recognition of which our peculiar civilization depends. Our civilization is the only one which has ever found

the means for reconciling these diverse needs of our nature and society, and for that very reason it is the only generally progressive civilization which the world has known. But it has, as the price of freedom, had to endure more cataclysms than any other, and to live always on the edge of conflict. Because ours is the civilization of peace and reconciliation, we have been constantly at odds with ourselves. If we grow weary of the struggle we may grow very fat but we shall lose our soul.

Commander King-Hall sees this clearly enough in writing of Russia. He sees that the communist achievement, which he views with a sympathy which does not much distort his balanced judgment, is by itself nothing in particular. It leaves the only political problem, the problem of the relation of man to God and his neighbours, unsolved. This problem, he rightly says, will have to be faced as the standard of living rises and the mind begins to resume its sway over the body. But there the enlightened observer of twentieth century facts becomes once again the mediævalist with his *a priori* principles. "Will communist principles," he asks, "stand the strain?" Why the question? One might as well ask whether prison discipline will stand the strain of a rise in the standard-of-living of the convicts. The answer depends, of course, not on the principles of subordination but on the efficiency of the police. Once the question of freedom is posed, communist principles have ceased to be relevant. If that question is, indeed, soon to be posed in Russia, as it never has been, Russia will be faced with the need for an experiment in the reconciliation of liberty and order which may yet win her to accepting that place in European civilization which she has so far refused. It is open to doubt, however, whether this peculiarly European question will ever be asked in Russia. If Europe is tiring of its complexity, is it likely that Russia, which has cared for none of these things for two thousand years, is going now to begin doing so?

It is noteworthy that in his survey of Western European and transatlantic economic problems, Commander King-Hall accepts without qualification the socialist solution as the only possible solution for the Western world. He does not, however, " wish to suggest . . . that the community will make a better job of the task than has been made by private enterprise." I fancy that this is just what he does wish, but he is far too intelligent to feel justified in giving his wish free rein. His analysis of the breakdown of the machinery of economic adjustment is very clear and fair. Mainly, he stresses the lack of effective demand, in contradistinction to " wants " and " needs." The needs remain, but the demand for the things needed is not economically effective and only becomes effective in jerks, with alternating periods of boom and slump as the machinery for adjusting demand to supply. As the production units get larger and more powerful, this process of adjustment gets too painful, and the losses involved in the resulting slumps are so great that the state has to step in. All this is true, and a new and interesting point is made on p. 336 of the second volume as to " the social consequences arising from the relationship between the rate of economic change and the length of human life."

The one question which Commander King-Hall does not ask himself, however, is how far these things are the result of the aggregation of the property, rather than, as he appears to assume, of the fact that it is not sufficiently aggregated. How much of our unemployment is due in fact to the absence of planning and how much to bad planning? Have we not in fact deliberately planned the evils he describes, and in particular that subordination of social to economic ends which has necessitated on humanitarian grounds so much state intervention and so impeded the processes of adjustment still further? Has not the whole process of expropriation, the deliberate creation of a dependent propertyless class, been due to the pursuit of something called economic efficiency by people who were catering in fact only for the needs of

the non-existent economic man. And can the problem be solved by completing the work of expropriation and making the whole world propertyless and so enslaved? Has any one, in fact, ever denied that, granted the fact of slavery and the standardization of consumption, man could be better clothed and housed. But who, when the question is properly put, has ever doubted that the price is too high. We are in fact standing, in this controversy, between two fallacies—that the end of the social order should be production on the one hand, or consumption on the other. The doctrine of work for work's sake, if less ignoble, is not much less foolish than the ideology of the leisure state. All men can do with a modest amount of consumption, and most men with a very modest share in the sources and tools of production. What they desire above all else is status, which is the social recognition of personality, and independence, which is its economic counterpart. These are the things which the champions of individualism and socialism alike sacrifice to their false gods. The solution lies not in a formula but in a fight. Only by constant effort will freedom survive in the modern world; for its survival, planning is necessary—but it must be planning directed to the end of freedom, and to the wider distribution of property, and a greater security of economic independence, not planning directed to an equal consumption of standardized goods. We are told, by democrats who love the people, that if "the people" are only given enough food and drink and amusements they will be happy all the day long. That is not the Christian teaching, and on that point those who believe that man has a soul and a destiny can never compromise with those who believe him an animal. If the business of the bureaucrat is only to keep the trough well filled, he will do it well enough. If it is to search the needs of the human heart, he will do it less well than we can do it for ourselves.

If there is one thing which shines clear through this long and able record of "Our Own Times" it is that the follies of governments are matched only by the indomitable

spirit of man himself; but man, though indomitable, is not patient. The sands are running out; our civilized western governments must think of some better solution for the chaos they have so largely created than the mere extension of their own powers if they are not to suffer the fate of so many august dynasties and institutions in the last fifteen years. Both at home and abroad, the politicians are seeking to engulf us in a closed system of international and economic plans. They have led us in so doing to the brink of war and to the edge of starvation. We shall survive these evils, and our free institutions will also survive them, on one condition: that they remain free. Any attempt to confine posterity within the bars of a closed system either of international treaties, arbitrary frontiers, or economic plans will, however, be resisted. Man was born free: he will not vote himself into chains, not even in order to retain the privilege of the vote.

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Italy and Abyssinia: the Italian Case

By Luigi Villari

THE Italo-Abyssinian dispute is of a kind familiar to all nations possessing colonies in Africa or Asia, but it has aroused far more excitement in Great Britain than most other similar disputes, owing to a series of misunderstandings which should be cleared up. British public opinion has above all failed to grasp the essential features of the question and the Italian point of view.

Many Englishmen, no doubt, believe that until the Wal-Wal incident relations between Italy and Abyssinia had been as friendly as those between Italy and, say, Switzerland, and that, apart from the rights and wrongs of the particular case, Italy took advantage of it in order to prepare a policy of wicked aggression. That, however, is not the whole story, nor indeed by any means the true story.

In the first place, the Wal-Wal incident itself has been greatly misrepresented. We must remember that the frontier between Italian Somaliland and Abyssinia has never been delimited, through no fault of Italy's. A delimitation agreement had been concluded in 1908, but it was the Abyssinian authorities which held up the work almost as soon as it had begun, on the pretext that they could not guarantee the safety of the members of the commission, and they placed every obstacle in the way of the resumption of the work. Consequently it is impossible to state definitely whether any particular point along the presumed frontier is actually in Italian or Abyssinian territory. In 1928 Wal-Wal and other points were occupied by the Italians, without any protest on the part of the Abyssinians, whose authorities frequently visited those places, while the various tribes, Italian and Abyssinian subjects, were constantly passing through with their cattle on their way to seek water and grazing

ground. It was not until December 5, 1934, after the Abyssinian authorities had received or thought they had received encouragement by the British member of the British-Abyssinian frontier delimitation commission (who, incidentally had departed several days before December 5) that they demanded the evacuation of Wal-Wal by the Italians, and on meeting with a refusal attacked the post and were beaten off.

But Wal-Wal was only the culminating episode of a series of incidents symptomatic of Abyssinia's general xenophobia and of her particularly hostile attitude towards Italy. By the terms of the Italo-Abyssinian Treaty of Friendship and Conciliation of 1928 (Italy was the only country to conclude such a treaty with Abyssinia) it was agreed that the two Governments should undertake to extend their reciprocal economic relations and render them more prosperous. Italy interpreted this agreement as a guarantee that she should have her proper share in the development and exploitation of the one still untouched part of Africa. We must remember that Italy, the only great European country except Germany with an active superabundant hard-working population, needing expansion more than any other, is the one precluded from it, and at the Paris Peace Conference, in spite of solemn promises embodied in treaties, she was given nothing, whereas the countries who already possessed vast colonial domains were yet further enriched.

Abyssinia systematically rejected every attempt at Italian collaboration, while she was ready to grant concessions to the nationals and firms of other countries. The Wal-Wal incident made Italy realize that Abyssinia was not only passively unfriendly, but might at any moment become actively hostile. The two Italian East African colonies are normally garrisoned by barely 8,000 men, whereas Abyssinia can at any moment call up an army of several hundred thousand, and during the past years has been steadily reorganizing and improving that

army with the help of sundry foreign missions, none of them Italian. Reinforcements cannot arrive from Italy in less than a week in Eritrea or a fortnight in Somaliland. During the world war the Italian colonies were also not undisturbed. Twice the Abyssinians concentrated on the Eritrean frontier with large forces and troops had to be hurried out from Italy and from Libya, in spite of the urgent necessities of the war, while in Italian Somaliland rebellions were promoted by Abyssinian agents. It was not until the Abyssinian revolution of 1916 that the danger in East Africa was averted. To-day if Italy were forced to concentrate her forces on her European frontiers, the Abyssinians might easily sweep down on the Italian colonies, and drive their normally weak garrisons into the sea.

The dispute in itself is important no doubt, but it would never have assumed a serious international character with repercussions in Europe had it not been for the intervention of the League of Nations, or rather for Great Britain's attempt to mobilize the League, for we must remember that it is only in Great Britain that the question has assumed a widespread League aspect. A section of the British Press proceeded to publish some attacks against Italy and the Italian army, and the Italian Press replied in kind, and this of course produced bitter feeling on both sides. The Press polemics are now attenuated, but their unfortunate effects remain.

The British view is that Italy's future action might jeopardize the prestige of the League and the system of collective security, and if in the past Great Britain did acquire vast colonial possessions, often by violence, to-day this is no longer possible because the League is there to prevent such action. The Italian retort is that it is all very well for Great Britain to invoke the League now, when she has secured all she wants; by flourishing the Covenant in order to prevent others from doing what she did so successfully in the past she lays herself open to the charge of hypocrisy, using the League as a sort of police-

man to stand guard over a *status-quo* which is exceptionally favourable to her, but exceptionally unfavourable to other countries.

In some quarters in Italy and elsewhere it is claimed that in this dispute Great Britain is even inspired by her own direct interests, and wishes to keep Abyssinia as a preserve for her own future economic and political activities. Personally I think this view is exaggerated. There may be some British economic interests in Abyssinia, but they do not appear to be very important, and even the question of the waters of Lake Tsana could be easily settled. It appears more probable that the attitude of British public opinion is inspired by a genuine fear of complications and the possibility that a widespread conflict between blacks and whites in many parts of Africa may be provoked by the Italo-Abyssinian dispute, and by an honest, if mistaken desire, to save the face of the League which has been rather badly battered in the Far East.

Italians reply to the first point by saying that it is by encouraging the Abyssinians that a solution is rendered much more difficult and a black versus white agitation made much more likely. To the second point they observe that the League has never yet been able to solve any question affecting the important interests of a great Power, and that by forcing it to take up a vigorous attitude on this question the League's friends risk involving it in a complete break-down. It is indeed the fact that the League's too zealous friends have always done it far more harm than its opponents or its more prudent supporters. I speak here from personal experience of three years on the League Secretariat.

Then there is the widespread feeling that it is grossly unfair to place Italy, a highly civilized country with over twenty centuries of progress behind it, on the same footing as Abyssinia, a conglomerate of barbarous tribes, where the military caste of one of them governs, or rather misgoverns, all the others. We must remember that

Abyssinia proper is only a part of the Abyssinian Empire; the rest of it and by far the largest part is inhabited by peoples who are not Abyssinians by race, language or religion, and who have only been annexed by right of conquest (which usually meant massacre and devastation) during the last fifty years. Abyssinia, it is true, is a member of the League of Nations; but she was admitted to that body in 1923 under false pretences. She had undertaken, as a condition of her admission, to abolish slavery; yet in the past twelve years, in spite of sundry edicts and prohibitions, slavery flourishes as before, and, according to Lady Simon's book " Slavery " there are at least 2,000,000 slaves out of a total population of 10,000,000.

The most serious aspect of the dispute is the rift which it has brought about in British-Italian friendship. These two countries, Allies in two wars and never at any time enemies, were always traditionally friends, and to-day they are two of the chief pillars for the maintenance of peace in Europe. As long as they continue to collaborate, together with France, it is extremely improbable that the forces of anarchy and disruption will be let loose, and even Germany is bound to come in, as, indeed, is desirable. But if Britain and Italy split apart, there is nothing to prevent those dangerous forces from rising up and plunging Europe into chaos. It would seem that the true spirit of the League of Nations is more likely to be observed if Great Britain, Italy and France stand side by side than if Great Britain assumes an attitude of hostility to Italy over a colonial question which does not affect the European situation. The very system of collective security, to which Great Britain attaches so much importance, is much more likely to be jeopardized if Italy leaves the League than if she is allowed to manage her own affairs without interference. The League will suffer more from Italy's departure than will Italy by leaving the League. We have seen how Japan and Germany have both been able to resign their membership

and snap their fingers at Geneva and, as in "The Jackdaw of Rheims," not be one penny the worse. In fact, Italians cannot help feeling that Great Britain has been almost obsequious to Germany and granted almost all that she demanded, in spite of the fact that Germany has broken innumerable treaty engagements.

And what about Italian public opinion on the dispute with Abyssinia? In certain foreign quarters it is claimed that Sig. Mussolini decided to undertake an African adventure in order to distract attention from an unsatisfactory internal situation and regain his lost popularity. Other critics maintain that the people were perfectly contented with things as they were, that to have sent troops to Africa was a mistake, and that the whole African policy is unpopular. Clearly both explanations cannot be true, and as a matter of fact neither is. The régime has never been stronger or more generally supported than it is to-day, and with the development of the corporative system every citizen feels that he is a part of the national organization. But on the other hand the people are convinced that the natural resources of the country, even though they are put to the best possible use and developed to the utmost, are limited and insufficient for the growing needs of the nation. Expansion in some form is therefore necessary, expansion which need not inevitably take the form of territorial conquest, but may mean the development of the more backward parts of the earth. Abyssinia appears to be a suitable field for such activity, preferably in collaboration with the Abyssinians. But if the Abyssinians reject all advances and show themselves uncompromisingly hostile to all forms of Italian activity, they should be taught a lesson.

When Abyssinian resistance appeared to be encouraged by Great Britain, or at least by a part of British public opinion and of the British Press, the Government's African policy immediately achieved an even greater measure of active popularity than before. The man in the street has little sympathy with the British attitude

towards the League of Nations. He considers that the League may in certain circumstances be a useful instrument of diplomatic procedure, but he has no patience with those who profess to regard it as a divinely-inspired organization and looks on all that sort of thing either as pure bunk, or as a smoke-screen hiding a *Realpolitik* of the most unadulterated Prussian brand. Consequently, the more opposition there is in Great Britain to Italian action, the stronger is the average Italian's determination to see the thing through somehow or other. In this, moreover, he is encouraged by the fact that while there are between fifty and sixty States members of the League, it is only one, Great Britain, that is trying to make heavy weather out of the Italo-Abyssinian dispute, and also by the memory that even when, as in the case of the Far Eastern crisis, the League condemned Japan's action unanimously, Japan went ahead, did as she liked—and nothing happened.

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The Battle of Sterling

By Hilaire Belloc

EVERYONE is talking in terms of armed conflict. The dread of war and prophecies of war fill the air. The possibility of renewed war is everywhere taken for granted, and even the probability of it widely accepted. All this is still (happily) words; but meanwhile a real conflict of the most active kind is actually engaged. It is not a possibility or a probability, it is a contemporary event. It is taking place as I write this and as you read, and on its issue the destiny of the world depends almost as much as on the issue of war declared. A battle is taking place which may be called " The Battle of Sterling "; it is the struggle between the new depreciated and fluctuating currency of the Bank of England (or " England " if you prefer a shorter and more convenient term) and the stabilized currencies in face of it. The one or the other party may be victor (it can hardly end in a draw)—and on which is victor very much of the world's immediate future turns.

A stabilized currency consists of a number of real objects which the State has the monopoly of issuing, such as coins of a fixed weight of gold which the State guarantees to be what they profess to be, accepts in payment of the taxes it levies, pays out as salaries to its servants and furnishers, and enforces as " legal tender "; on it are based instruments of credit: written or printed promises to pay. Even verbal promises to pay are, in effect, instruments of credit.

But these instruments of credit had a certain limit so long as the currency consisted in real objects, such as coins of a guaranteed weight of gold. A much greater number of promises to pay might be in circulation than the number of pieces of gold which they were pledged to redeem; but there was a limit to the process of issuing such promises because they had to be redeemed in real things; and the rate at which the demand for repayment came in fixed the proportion of " paper " to real money.

Even where the State guaranteed the repayment of particular kinds of promises (in our case notes of the Bank of England) instruments of credit could not be indefinitely extended. One might, in a crisis when everybody was clamouring for gold and there was a danger of the credit system breaking down, bolster it up by a pretence that an excessive issue of notes which could not in fact immediately be repaid were certain to be met. One might by issuing an excess of notes restore confidence. That was the temporary device known as the *Suspension of the Bank Charter Act*; and while it was at work, the proportion of credit to gold would be excessive. But in the long run the proportion of credit to real money would keep a fairly fixed ratio.

Much the most important part of the credit margin based on real money is what is called to-day, "Bank Credit."

It is called "Bank Credit" because it comes into being through the action of the banks. These having received real currency deposited with them for safety, found that the depositors only drew it out again at a certain rate, taking them all round, leaving balances untouched. Thus, ten men having each left a thousand pounds with the bank, one might draw out and pay in an average of five hundred pounds a week, another only ten pounds a week. The first man left a balance of five hundred pounds, the second nine hundred and ninety; and the other customers left balances in between these two extreme sums. The bank found that, in practice, it could lend out to creditors on security the balances so left on condition that it retained a certain proportion to meet the daily withdrawals. In other words, the bankers lent other men's money without asking their leave. But there grew up a tacit understanding that the depositor should not trouble about that, but regard it as a way of letting the banker pay himself for the good custody which he maintained.

The next step, after lending the actual money the

depositor had left in custody, was for the bank to issue a "Promise to Pay" called a *Note*. On this paper note was written (and later printed) a promise to pay so many real coins on demand. People found that they could always get the real money when they asked for it, and therefore the "Bank Notes" passed readily from hand to hand as though they were so many real coins while, as a fact, they were only promises to pay the same.

Meanwhile it was convenient for the depositor, instead of withdrawing, say, one hundred of his coins on deposit for payment of some account, to write a letter asking the bank to pay that sum to the bearer, or to some person named. This written demand is to-day the "Cheque." Now the person named would also probably have a banking account, and while he held this cheque authorizing him to draw one hundred gold coins from the bank he might himself be writing a similar cheque to someone to whom *he* wanted to pay eighty coins. Both bits of paper met at the bank, one partly cancelled the other, and all the actual metal the bank had to find was twenty coins, which it handed out to the second of its two clients. So here was a total money movement of one hundred and eighty coins appearing in its books, and the whole transacted with only one-ninth of that total sum in metal.

Then came a last step, by far the most important in the series, by which the banks, with their "Bank Credit" taking the place of real money have come to control the whole of our society. A man known to the bank wanted, for some purpose, more ready money than he could at the moment command. He asked the bank to lend it to him, either offering good security or convincing the bank that what he was going to spend the money on was a paying proposition. The bank did not lend him the actual money—say, one thousand coins more than the hundred he had already on deposit—it *opened a credit for him.* That is, it promised to honour his cheques, over and above his deposit of real money, up to the

limit of a thousand extra coins, and for this service it charged, say, 5 per cent. The borrower drew his cheques for this money, but meanwhile those in whose favour he was drawing them were also drawing cheques on similar credits advanced to *them*; and when all these cheques had passed through the bank, the great bulk of their amounts cancelled out, one against the other; and on these purely imaginary loans, "money made of air," money made by the banker and not coined at the Mint, the borrowers were all paying 5 per cent. At the end of that development a very small amount of gold metal was at the basis of a vast amount of currency transactions, the enormously greater part of which were "Bank Credit," and not real money at all. But because the paper was always renewable in gold coins, prices remained much what they would have been if real gold coins had been circulating at top speed instead of mere promises-to-pay taking their place.

A revolution took place when the banking system of a State (or the State itself: the two are to-day much the same thing) suspended gold payments. The bank note might or might not still bear the words: "I promise to pay the bearer so many golden sovereigns." The gold would not, in fact, be paid, for a law or decree had absolved the bank from the duty of making its promise good.

The trick was played, not by telling the truth in so many words and saying: "Every citizen *except the banker* is bound to meet his obligations, under penalty of coercion by the State"; it was played by changing the meaning of the word which described the coin. Thus, suppose the standard gold coin of the realm to be one-quarter of an ounce of gold (as the old sovereign nearly was), and suppose it to be called "One Pound." The new law did not say that the bank, having promised to pay "One Pound," might break its promise with impunity; all that it said was that in future the words "One Pound" were no longer to mean a quarter of an

ounce of gold, but some less amount, fixed or fluctuating. If the amount were *fixed* at, say, one-half the old amount, so that "One Pound" was really ten shillings, the currency was said to be "devalued," but still stable. If it were left *unfixed* the currency was unstabilized, and its value depended merely upon how many bits of paper the Government chose to print.

This is what happened when England "went off gold" in September, 1931. Sterling no longer meant so much weight of gold (somewhat less than a quarter of an ounce), but some lesser amount, which fluctuated with the exchanges of commerce, and the action of the authorities and banks with issuing paper notes and credits.

The new pound sterling—which is no longer a real coin, but only a bit of paper called "A Pound Sterling"—has, with many ups and downs, been falling ever since. As I write it is not worth quite six-tenths of its old gold value.

Now it seemed obvious that when the currency was thus lowered in value prices would rise. If you wanted to buy a thing with a quarter ounce of gold and your old quarter-ounce coin was only worth $\frac{1}{3}$ of an ounce, you would have to pay twice as many coins. Prices, measured in pounds, would double. Well, *that did not happen*. What happened was what the Continent calls "The Miracle of the Pound." Prices fell, not exactly as much as, nor parallel to, the fall of the pound sterling, but *with* the pound sterling. Nations which had kept a stabilized gold currency found themselves paying more and more in *their* currency for goods which, in countries linked with the pound sterling, cost in pounds much more nearly the same as they had done before the crash. The area of purchasing power covered by the "Sterling Bloc" was so large (all the British Empire, Scandinavia, much of South America—all the people whose trade depends upon England) that it had more effect than the "gold bloc."

This unexpected happening gave sudden encourage-

ment to those who had always argued in favour of a "managed currency." These had said: "Let us pay no attention to gold. Prices measured in gold will always fluctuate, and thus either the debtor is defrauded or the creditor, because the things and services gold will purchase will be less or more in gold than they were when the debt was incurred. Let us issue currency with an eye on general prices only, issuing less paper money when they tend to rise and more when they tend to fall. In this way a pound sterling will always buy the same amount on the average, and *prices* will be stable—which is much more important than the *currency* being stable."

This the British Government and banking system have now been doing, more or less, for nearly four years. So that we buy raw material not very differently from of old, and prices within the country are not very different from those of old. The situation is not so favourable to us as is officially pretended in order to keep people satisfied. The "index number" is debatable—to say the least! But on the whole the sterling bloc is nearer a stability of prices than was once thought possible. Under industrial capitalism wage costs are far the largest factor in prices, and while we have defrauded the wage earner of 40 per cent. of his wages, he does not know it, because all the other wage earners are in the same boat, the things they make have fallen in proportion, and therefore what they consume comes, in pounds, to much what it did before.

Meanwhile the "Gold Bloc" is heavily handicapped. For instance, while our "labour costs" were being cut, as measured in gold, by 40 per cent., the French miners, with the greatest difficulty, were got to take 18 per cent. less than they used to get in gold. While our railwaymen ended with 60 per cent. of their old wages, the Dutch and Swiss got 80 per cent. of their old wages. All the minor expenses of life show this contrast. A letter sent from England to France costs twopence-halfpenny in sterling—that is, less than a penny-halfpenny in

gold. The Frenchman pays one franc fifty centimes for a letter to England, and that is over *three* pennies in gold.

People sometimes ask why the "Sterling Bloc" (as expressed in the English newspapers) rejoices when a foreign nation is "forced off gold," or to devaluate, as Belgium was forced to do this spring. The answer is, that the more the area of unstable currency increases, the more attraction does the pound sterling exercise. Already the American currency, though devalued so nearly level with our own (only a penny or two dearer) feels concern for its export trade. When the pound fell in March to just over seventy-one francs, the American Press was alarmed and angry. For American currency is provisionally stabilized at just on 60 per cent. of its old value. There was talk of lowering further, but that would be merely following sterling. Belgian money, of the new kind, has not quite reached sterling level; but it is not far off. The Dutch stabilized gold currency was in some danger during a violent attack from London this spring; the German and Italian are only maintained by artificial restrictions, they have no free movement of gold. If the French franc goes, all currencies worth counting will be adrift, and the tendency will be very strong to reduce all to a sterling level. If that happens, sterling gives its measure to the world, and resumes the place it had when the gold pound was imposed by this country as the one unquestioned standard—from Waterloo to the Great War.

On the other hand, so long as a considerable area of gold stabilized currency remains, sterling is in peril. It was going over the edge in March when the successful attack on the belga saved it, and the moment men doubt our power or desire to restrict the printing of imaginary paper pounds men will rush to convert these bits of paper into stabilized foreign currencies—that is, into gold—and our currency will slide.

The test of victory in this struggle will be whether or no the currencies, including the pound sterling, return to a stabilized form measured in gold. It matters not,

in the long run, whether the amount of gold in each unit —the franc, the belga, the dollar, the pound—be less than it now is. The point is, will stabilization at some one standard in gold be reached by each of them, including the pound sterling? If it is—if currencies are thus "stabilized"—the battle for universal sterling domination is lost.

It must not be imagined that all those concerned with the matter in England are averse to such an issue. On the contrary, those who desire the indefinite continuation of a "managed currency" are a minority in numbers and influence. Their opponents would willingly sacrifice sterling predominance and even (theoretically) stable prices for the advantage of stable exchanges and of a fixed standard in some real material or materials—and gold is the obvious one, though gold linked with silver is conceivable. But the French attempt to reconcile parliamentary government with democratic equality has brought the franc to the near approach of a collapse; and if that takes place, it will make general stabilization impossible. In the chaos, sterling would impose itself permanently and would for the future dominate the world. On the other hand, if the franc is saved, the effort to impose sterling will fail, for, while a very large and permanent body of gold coinage remains anywhere in the world, the effort at maintaining what may be called "metaphysical money"—money depending on the confidence men feel in its manipulators—cannot long continue.

The Gentler Way :

By Pamela Frankau

I

"IS that a cave near the summit?" the traveller asked. The barman, who was already very tired of answering questions about mountains, replied that it was.

"Can one climb to it easily?"

"One can; one does. But that one is not as we are," said the barman, adding up the traveller's bill with full advantage to himself.

"I don't follow you," said the traveller, as he studied the bill.

"There is a man living in that cave."

"I hope it keeps fine for him," the traveller remarked —"Lend me your pencil," and he amended the bill. Placing the result of his sum and the sum of his result before the barman, he rose. He looked upward, across the pine-trees to the mountain peak. The barman sighed.

"Weather is of no importance to the owner of the cave," he explained—"He is a holy man."

"How do you know?" asked the traveller rudely.

"He is a hermit."

"I would call that an instance of bad temper rather than of sanctity."

"Hush," said the barman, shocked—"He descends once a week to bless this village, and to beg a little food. For the rest of the time he stays aloft, in the cold and grim discomfort of his cave, praying. Four times a year we make the pilgrimage to see the cave."

"And how does it look?" asked the traveller.

"A bare tunnel with rock sides, and no warmth save for a small wood fire. He sleeps on sacking. You never saw a poorer place."

"Well, well," said the traveller, more impressed, "and when does he come down to the village? I should like to meet him."

"He should descend the day after to-morrow."

"If I am still here," said the traveller, "I shall make a point of meeting him. Which part of the village does he frequent?"

"He goes from house to house. You should find him towards midday in the market-place."

The traveller stayed the two days. On the first day he climbed a mountain, and argued afterwards, with the barman, about the names of its peaks, while the back of his neck burned from the sun. On the second day, he woke and remembered the hermit. The servant, who brought his breakfast, hoped reverently that the holy man would come. Limping a little after his exertions on the sérac, the traveller patrolled the village. The sun insulted his neck; the children, the cats and the dogs seemed more vocal than ever. He paused for a drink on his way to the market-place.

The barman had toothache. Grateful for his silence, the traveller sat at a table beneath the plane trees, staring ever toward the mountains; particularly toward the steep face under the twin peaks, where the cave showed like a small bruise. He saw the pines falter on the high slopes; he saw the ungarnished rock above; and he thought he saw a path, slight as a thread of grey hair upon black, graven upward from the last pines. He ordered another drink.

Just as the barman was swallowed by the door of his bar, a solid sound triumphed over the slender individual noises of the street. Into the traveller's vision there poured a chute of small children; they moved with dancing steps. They halted to look backward impatiently. There followed a tall shape, bowed upon a stick. Its brownish habit was blanched with dust. Its head craned forward; the strong beard pointed like a dagger. The bare, brown ankles were lean, and the sandals upon the feet seemed a size too large. Its shuffling progress hampered the crowd at its heels.

"The hermit, possibly," said the traveller, sitting up and drinking with a gulp.

The children hung back, chattering shrilly, while the old man halted and turned. He came to the table where the traveller sat. He raised two fingers of one hand in blessing; the words he spoke were unintelligible.

"Not at all," said the traveller politely.

The face of the hermit was strait, and beaked like a falcon; his eyes, with small lines arrowing from their corners, had no light in them. He stood still. The traveller observed that the shoulders, beneath the worn habit, were broad; the waist, slim, where the cord gripped it.

"You are a stranger," the hermit said.

"I am."

"I wish you well."

"Thanks," said the traveller. "Won't you have a drink?"

"A glass of water, if it please you."

"Wouldn't please *me*," said the traveller, as he beckoned the barman—"Sit down. You have walked a long way."

The old man seated himself on the plank bench. A child drew near with the elaborate movements of a cat, and his large hand caressed its head.

"These are my friends."

"Yes, they don't seem to spit at you," said the traveller enviously—"Tell me why you isolate yourself in that cave up there?"

"For the soul," said the hermit.

"Isn't that a little hard on the body?" asked the traveller, dipping his face in the second tankard of beer.

"What is the body?" the deep, beautiful voice replied.

"Search me," said the traveller. "Aren't you very cold at night?"

"I have a small wood fire. But the wood is a burden to carry from among the pines. The villagers bring me presents of it. They are simple people," he added, "but they are very good to me."

"Everyone here talks of you," said the traveller.

"I do them what small services I can."

"Meaning blessings, I suppose," the traveller commented silently; aloud, he said, "Why did you decide to leave the world?"

"Because it irked me."

"It irks me at times," said the traveller, more solemnly. "But I like to be comfortable. Do the luxuries of the flesh mean nothing to you?"

"Nothing."

"You are fortunate."

The old man drank his glass of water. "You will find the way," he observed.

"How?"

"Wait," said the hermit.

"For what?" The traveller found himself already a little graver than was his habit at eleven o'clock in the morning. He beckoned again to the barman. The hermit was tracing a pattern on the dust, with the end of his staff. He did not answer the question. The child, who had crept away, returned, carrying a loaf of bread. The hermit thanked him, and turned it in his hands.

"I shall find a piece of silver hidden there," he mused. "For the little I bring them, I have great rewards." He looked to the mountain. "I can only set them the example. They must follow by their own ways."

"As to which," said the traveller, pointing, "do I see there a path leading to your cave?"

The hermit shaded his eyes with his hand. "No," he said at last. "That is a trick of shadow. The way these children take to visit me is by the steeper side, my own path, on the other face of the mountain."

The traveller was silent.

The old man rose to his feet. "You are ridden by wordly forces, my son," he said. "These should not endure."

The traveller set down an empty tankard. "Do you go back now to your cave?" he asked.

"Later. At dusk."

"And you will remain there until you come here again?"

"Alas. To-morrow I must leave my peace and my prayers to visit a house in the other valley. There lives a man of great worldly possessions; he is dying, and I wish to give him some courage of the light before he goes. And now—" The hand was raised again in blessing. Uncomfortably, the traveller offered a silver piece.

"I thank you, my son," said the hermit with dignity. "May you come to the light by your own path."

The traveller woke from a reverie to find the barman at his elbow. The barman said: "All look as you do now, after he has passed."

II

The traveller had meant to continue his journey on the next morning. He stayed up late at the bar, and listened to the village men talking of the hermit. They spoke words of reverence and praise. When he asked them questions, they answered him a little haughtily; he found himself envying them, and, being unaccustomed to envy, sulked his way to bed.

His dreams were haunted by the shabby figure who had put the world away. He woke early, and lay considering his own world, that was bounded on the one side by his sufficient income, on the other by the woman he loved.

Unable to sleep again, he went to his window. Over the bleached mountain-heads there lay a sky without a cloud. Rock and pine stood exquisitely sketched in the clear morning. And where the hollow of the cave dinted one peak, his eyes traced the slim line that might have been a path.

"If I follow the road to the South," he thought, "and mount among the pine trees, I shall come out upon that face. If it is not a path, it is, at least, a

cleft by which one might climb. And if not, there is no harm done."

He called upon the barman at eight. The barman had not shaved, and made difficulties over providing brandy for the traveller's flask. "Where do you go so early?" he growled.

"Climbing."

"Where?"

The traveller pointed.

"Nobody goes that way. You will lose your life."

"Or find my soul," the traveller said, pocketing the flask.

"If you wish to visit him," the barman said, "go by the way we take. Though he does not care for interruptions."

"Breaking my neck need be but the smallest of interruptions," the traveller promised. "I will fall as gently as a leaf."

The barman snorted.

The traveller took the straight road through the valley. He walked for an hour before he reached the lowest pines on the mountain of the hermit. He left the sun's territory for the shade. The stone tracks led steeply. He walked with increasing fatigue. At midday, he rested for an hour, eating chocolate and drinking the brandy. When he looked out between the pines, new peaks had ridden up on the horizons; he could see the whole chequered length of the valley, the toy herds on the lower slopes, far away, the village of doll's houses. When he looked ahead, he saw only the boles of the trees and the lacing of sunshine through their branches.

"Perhaps another hour before I come to the end of the pines," he thought. He swallowed more brandy. He mused. "If that path exists, I wonder why he does not take it. This must be a gentler way than on the steep side. But perhaps," he reflected, "a holy man has no use for gentler ways."

Presently, he rose, and, deep in his thoughts of the

hermit, did not notice the further walk with discomfort. When he found that the trees were growing scarce, and the light more plentiful, he drew a deep breath. Ahead the tumbled rock surface rose sheer. The walk between the last pines became a struggle. The traveller came into the full force of the sun.

He stood still. There were large boulders on a short stretch of level ground. Beyond the level ground, the rock stood, perpendicular and grave, against the sky. From here he could not see the cave. He could see the beginning of his path, and though it lay narrow as a snake, its cleft made a deep violet shadow on the grey.

He found that he could climb the path if he clung to the rock wall above it. Having no disturbance in the head when he looked downward he mounted slowly, confidently. Soon he rose, hand over hand, foothold by foothold, between the crags. Already the pines were far down; he seemed alone in the sky.

"The climb must grow palpably worse before I break my neck," he boasted.

This way ended abruptly at the foot of a couloir that fell from a cleft between two giant rocks. The traveller hesitated. "Above that, I suppose, the dangers begin," he thought. He crawled up the couloir, not troubled by its steep ascent since there were slopes at either side.

There was the beginning of doubt in his heart; a memory of the barman's words hung in his head as he reached the two large rocks, and drew himself up with a hand on each.

III

For a moment he crouched at the couloir's head. He did not know what he had expected to find; a ravine, invisible from the valley; a face of stone with no foothold; a climb among more cruel crags; at least, not that which lay before him.

He saw a rock platform, fifty yards wide, from whose furthest edge, two clumsy steps led to the front of the cave.

"What the devil," said the traveller, wiping his face with his sleeve, "did the barman mean?"

He saw the other path, descending to this same platform from between the two sharp peaks at the summit. And as he wondered, a sick disappointment interrupted his doubts. "He is not there," the traveller remembered. "This day he was forced to visit the dying man in the other valley. And I have come all this way for nothing."

Presently, when he had drunk again from his flask, he ceased to curse himself. "At least I can go into the cave," he thought, staring at the shadowed archway. "It will be good for me to see this place. And perhaps he may return before sunset. Anyhow, I can tell those unadventurous villagers that this is the easier way. Unless they wish to mortify themselves to the full throughout their pilgrimage, they should take it."

He rose from his rock and walked to the door of the cave. A rough curtain of sacking was rolled on a ledge over the doorway. The traveller entered.

After the sun, the dark descended so violently upon his eyes, that he stood blind and groping. Gradually the spinning colours that invaded this dark slowed, paled, went. He looked about him.

The cave was perhaps thirty feet square; the sides worn smooth, the back wall covered with another sacking curtain. The sacks in the corner must serve for a bed. Old books lay on shelves carven from the stone. There was a crucifix rested in a niche; a second niche held a rough wooden candlestick. At the centre of the floor, a low brick fireplace was half filled with ash; the only visible chimney, a blackened hole in the roof. The wood-pile stood against the further curtain.

The traveller observed all this with awe. He turned towards the doorway, and looked out. The mountain peaks that towered in majesty when he raised his eyes to them from the village, were neighbouring battlements. Beyond them again and again, there lay fainter peaks, and, at last, the snows.

"Here, indeed, one is near Heaven," the traveller thought. "And if the body can be so dominated, can find no hardship too great, who knows what expansion of the soul and the mind may follow?"

He stood very still; while the sunlight smote the nearer peaks and etched them.

"If it were so, with me . . . ."

He turned abruptly from the doorway. "I will await him," he decided. "And if it is dark when he returns, he may not object to my passing a night here."

He stretched himself upon the sacks, grimacing at the hard rock beneath.

He lay for a long time, drowsy with fatigue, seeing in his half-dream the village that he had left, as a band of children trusting in the truth that stood only at this height. And he saw how the tall figure must stand upon the rock at sunset, with the two fingers of one hand raised. And he saw again the mountain peaks stretch away by their dissolving chains to the utter white of the snows. He slept.

When he woke, the shadows in the cave had deepened all about him. Made practical by sleep, he forgot his half-formed vows, and rose hurriedly. His watch pointed half-past six. At the doorway he consulted the sky, from which the deeper blue had faded. Over the immediate mountains, great shades were drawing after a golden mist.

"He is late," the traveller thought, "and I am very stiff from the walk. What I need is a hot bath. As to which," he added, "is there a stream at this height? He looked clean enough."

He glanced round the cave, and his eyes rested at the curtain on the back wall. "Is there anything behind that curtain? A basin carved from the rock, perhaps."

The thought of water made him thirsty. He approached the back wall, and, standing beside the wood-pile, he lifted the curtain.

IV

He walked through the smallest of doorways. A second dark blinded his eyes, and he saw nothing. He held himself carefully, for he thought that the space wherein he stood must be very narrow. He stretched his hands on either side of him, and the finger-tips encountered nothing. His eyes began to discover a great hall, many times larger than the cave. Astonished, he turned and fastened the sacking behind the wood-pile, so that the light must enter.

He saw clearly. The hall was arched with stone, like a cellar. The furthest corners were dark. On the floor there were fur pelts, lying so close as to form a continuous carpet, thick and soft. He saw niches in the walls; these held no crucifix, no candlestick, no shabby books; only bronze lamps and curious figures. At the open fireplace, there stood a large squat stove, such as the traveller had seen in Alpine huts. Beside the fire was drawn a long divan, covered with the skin of a snow leopard. Had one lain on the divan, his hand would have stretched easily to the little table, on whose inlaid surface there stood a silver box, a flagon of twisted scarlet glass; a gold mug and a small cedar-wood chest, filled with cheroots. The air was warm. The traveller sniffed the scent of a silver censer that spiralled its faint, leisured smoke from the shelf above the fireplace. His elbow touched a candelabra, five feet in height, bronze, with seven branches that carried their wax candles. A wrought iron screen fronted the fire. There were sprays of autumn leaves and red rowan berries in bronze jars.

The traveller passed his hand over his eyes. Then, faltering a little, he passed into the shadows of the furthest archway. Here he could see nothing. He went back to the centre hall and took the silver matchbox from the table. He struck a match, holding it before him.

Here was a smaller recess, and the air was cold. The three walls were shelved to hold many cobwebbed bottles,

standing or lying. Before the match went out, the traveller read the names and the years upon half a dozen bottles. He whistled. The flame died, and he did not rekindle it. He moved to the left. He struck another match. A second recess, cold as the first, was stocked with food. The traveller saw grey grains of caviare; a cold duck; a Stilton cheese. He turned away.

Voyaging across the back of the hall, he encountered the archway at the second corner. He walked on smooth stone. Before he lit a match, his knees smote the side of a white marble bath. The sound of water troubled one wall. Under the timorous light he saw that the natural stream had been diverted to pass through a small heater before it reached the bath. For the moment, it pursued a way down the wall, and out of sight. Above the bath, upon a shelf, there were jars, whose lids he lifted to find perfume and herbs. A white fur rug lay on the floor.

With a sound in his throat that might have been tears or laughter, the traveller raised his hands and covered his face. He walked, so muffled, to the centre hall. Here he stood, swaying from one foot to another. He was repeating. "'And do the luxuries of the flesh mean nothing to you?' 'Nothing.' 'You are fortunate.'" Then he said wearily. "O fools; poor village fools. But not such fools as I, for you live in your paradise." Then he laughed for a long time.

"No, I shall not await him," he decided, "I shall go now. But to-morrow I will come back and bring his flock with me. And they can whip him from here down to the village for his beliefs." He took a cheroot from the box as though to light it; then flung it away. "No, you damned hypocrite," he said, "Worldly forces may ride me, but you have harnessed them for your own use." He strode through the doorway that led to the simple cave, and dragged the curtain over it. Just before the dark fell again, his eyes caught the square of a clumsy oak door upon his left.

"And what shall I find there?" he mused, "Naked

women or the insignia of the Black Mass?" His hands pushed the door; heavily, awkwardly it fell back. For a second something shone out of the gloom; then the door banged and brought total dark.

V

He had not replaced the matchbox. Now he struck a light and halted. His eye saw the gold pieces that were heaped in the four corners; his mind refused them (with the high case of books in soft bindings, with the match that burned his fingers) for another thing here. A third candelabra branched at his elbow, and with the new match he touched their wicks. His hand shook. The candles flamed.

From the dim shape which lay tumbled at his feet, the light flung up at him the strait face, the nose beaked like a falcon; the large hands lying open, and in one hand a gold piece. The hermit had put off his monkish robe for silk and brocade. In the wide scarlet halo of his collar, the fallen head lay blanched; the bones of the face might have been hammered silver. The candle flames burned higher, spraying the heaps of money with liquid light, allotting twisted shadows to the figure upon the ground, hurling the traveller's own shadow to the roof.

The traveller knelt. The hand that he touched, was cold, as he had guessed it to be; the hand fell again with a little sound upon the stone. Under the silk robe, there was no movement of the breast. The traveller explored the face. He saw how the left cheek contracted, how the fierce mouth drew that way a little, how the left shoulder twisted.

"And so—" he said—"They have lost their holy man." He stood up; he shook his head. "They never had a holy man."

While he stood by the body, he thought of them, the villagers whom he had known only for a day and a night; their honest, ugly faces· their narrow lives; their

poor houses that clustered in the shade of the mountain, as sheep pressing together for warmth. He recalled the men with whom he had spoken in the bar, their pride when he challenged them; the barman's words: "All look as you do now, after he has passed." He thought of the children who followed the hermit without fear; of the servant who said, "Yes, he should come to-day," while her eyes lit suddenly in her ruined face. He saw the pilgrimage mount up by the steeper path, that the villagers might receive the blessing and leave their presents before the cave.

"No," he said aloud, and the word went back to him from the stone walls. "No."

He walked to the outer cave and took the crucifix from its niche. He kneeled beside the body, and straightened it and folded the hands, with the cross between them. Then he stepped back. He pushed the candelabra with his knee; it rocked; the flames bellied outward. He flung himself against it, and it fell, directly upon the body. A leaf of fire sprouted on the silk robe; and another leaf. The traveller slammed the door.

Smoke was beginning to sift through the cracks in the wood, when he ran out and left the centre hall beginning to flame also, where its candelabra lay fallen upon the furs. As he passed the outer cave, a gulp of smoke blew upon the sacking curtain; a spark caught it. He heard, within, a rising roar, like the first sign of an avalanche.

Outside, the sky also, was on fire. The sunset scrolled every smallest cloud with crimson, shovelled its coals upon the snow, blazed against the rocks and threw long, red plumes across the valley. Below the red, a greenish plane of sky shone smooth as water. While he fled down the couloir and the rock-face, the traveller's eyes were dazzled; he went furiously, knowing that it would be dark when he reached the end of the pines.

He crashed between them as the light died off their boles. A minute later he saw another light touch them;

not from the West, but from the East, and it was a brighter red.

Only when he reached the road could he look up to the highest peak. He saw the glow there; a cavern of fire in the dusk. Above, a thin veil troubled the first stars.

The traveller walked slowly upon the road from the South. He saw the poor village lights struggling a little way into the dark. "They are safe," he thought—"Their holy man lives for ever."

He heard a bell ring violently from the steeple, and as he drew near the first houses, voices came to him in a loud clamour.

"They have seen the fire," he said, "and they shall see nothing else that can destroy."

VI

A week later, the traveller was hanged in the market-place, for the murder of the holy man. Though he vowed his innocence, he could not disprove his guilt. He met his death politely, being calm until the rope was placed upon his neck, when he began to laugh. He went on laughing, and ceased only when the rope was drawn.

The fire destroyed the cave with a great fall of rock; there is no trace remaining. Pilgrimages are still the habit of the village people, who climb the steep side of the mountain, to leave tokens at the shrine. The shrine was placed there at the wish of the traveller, who left money enough to build it.

Change of Address

By C. E. Baines

'TWAS " Sir " and " Madam " in the days of yore
And " Citizen " under the Tricolor.
But in this word the Marxian viewed askance
Too much of Rome—and much too much of France.
So " Comrade " now to " Citizen " succeeds;
But even " Comrade " scarce suits modern needs;
It breathes old loyalties and old alarms—
A word for men—even for men-at-arms.
So crude a term could scarcely designate
The placid units of the Leisure State.
So in that well-controlled society
" Good morning—Inmate ! " shall the greeting be.

Portuguese Setting

By Lt.-Col. P. R. Butler, D.S.O.

I.—Cintra

UNDER the twin *colossi* of its "oast-house" chimneys—the first features to catch your eye of Cintra's palace—is a jumbled mass of architecture, Gothic, Moorish, Renaissance, Manueline, through which runs a curious unity. It is a unity imposed by time on a conglomerate whose components are all beautiful. Even the Manueline, which reveals itself chiefly in the elaboration of belvederes and windows, blends in with all the rest, and calls to mind examples one has seen in India of unexpected arabesques and tracery upon otherwise blank exteriors.

And this calling to mind of India can go further than Moslem India. Set Udaipur and Cintra side by side, and they will have little enough in common. Yet this Portuguese place of vanished pomps and yesterdays brings the Rajput citadel, with its thronging towers and courses, vividly into the memory.

In one particular, certainly, the East and the West approximate. Nobody who has read the history which is behind the monuments of Hindostan will miss the cruelty which lurks there. In the University of Coimbra, a few days after quitting Cintra, we were to see the "Hall of the Assassinations," and here in Cintra's palace, amid the loveliness of halls and fountains, the spot remaining clearest in the memory is a room, some 25 feet square, in which a King of Portugal was kept in solitary confinement for six years, until his death. A groove is worn in the *azulego* floor by his ceaseless pacing; and if you look through the bars of the single window to see what view he had of the outer world you will just discern the Moorish Castle, on its height, and a small section of the mountain crest-line. A poor, inoffensive sort of man he seems to have been, this sixth Alfonso;

and his effigy, which you see amid the other kingly effigies in the shrine of Alcobaça, makes him more like his own court-jester than a king!

* * *

Byron wrote scathingly of Lisbon and its people; and that perhaps explains why there is no memorial plaque, or any kind of inscription, over the house in which he stayed in Cintra. Indeed, the house itself would be difficult to locate were it not that part of its old name, "Hotel Lawrence," may still be deciphered near the lintel. English people ask, from time to time, to be admitted; but its value as a money-maker cannot outweigh the crime of the detraction; and it is not shown to visitors.

Yet Byron wrote in glowing terms of Cintra, his "glorious Eden." You may follow in the footsteps of his *Childe* to Monserrate, that garden which surpasses even Mortola, by pleasaunces which the Portuguese style "*quintas*," set along a road as beautiful as any road in Europe. The "Palace of the Seven Sighs" is there, scene of the great Convention; and along it, too, is Penha Verde, where João de Castro, a mighty Indian viceroy, spent his last years in poverty. That rock is there, crowned by the six tall trees which were all the reward he asked for his services to Portugal; and the story runs that a suspicious government, searching his belongings after he had died, for hidden treasure, found only a single *vintem*, which is equal in our coinage to a penny.

* * *

High above the ridge along which Cintra spreads itself the Royal castle of Pena stands (like so much else in Portugal) on the site of an ancient monastery; and the upshot of the combination of exuberant Manueline with 19th-century German-Gothic run riot is a splendid copy of the mediæval, which it would be harsh to describe as "sham." The guide-books are fond of calling the

great pile "a Portuguese Balmoral"; which is hardly being fair to either. Much more properly is Pena the embodiment of those fastnesses which the imagination conjures from the fanfares of "Lohengrin" and "Siegfried." Boars and heavy-antlered stags do not emerge at Pena, as they emerge in the Scottish castle, from thickets of broom and rhododendron; though, on the other hand, no architect in the Highlands has placed himself, in armour, on a conspicuous rock, as the architect has done at Pena.* But the *view* which you get from Pena makes it difficult to decide with what castle, royal or other, to compare it. To the north, every detail of Extremadura is made manifest—brown plains and valleys, into which brown villages are merged—tumbled ridges, amid which wander the far-flung "Lines" of Torres Vedras—Mafra, like a great rock—and the Atlantic surf, breaking along the shore. Southward, across the Tagus estuary, are clearly visible on a propitious day the mountains beyond Setubal, and the white walls of Arrabida. The precipices, at your feet, rise from valleys filled with sub-tropical vegetation—in striking contrast to the plain—and with gardens full (in February) of scarlet and white camellias.

Having been the abode of Royalty, the Pena palace is thronged all day with trippers, whose delight it is to swarm through the "private" portion, where the rooms have been left exactly as they were on the day of 1910, when the owners fled towards the coast. Copies of "*Modern Society*" on the table in the late King's study are objects of especial reverence to the British.

* * *

The afternoon of rain and windy sunshine which gave us the Moorish Castle to ourselves showed us

* The Baron von Eschwege, complete with helmet, shield and spear, stands on a rock, within bowshot of his castle, towards which he gazes. On picture-postcards he is occasionally miscalled Vasco da Gama!—AUTHOR.

Cintra, far below us, vignetted by a trick of atmospherics so that palace and surrounding buildings were enclosed exactly by a rainbow, with everything else shut out. The conical chimneys of the one, and the distinctive "Tables-of-the-Law" chimneys of the other,* stood out with extraordinary clearness. This Moorish Castle gets cut off from the world below by mists which swirl up suddenly and surround it; and all that morning they had been so thick that even the guides had left their posts at the castle entrance, anticipating no custom; so that after we had entered through a clanging gate at the end of a long climb in the forest we were alone in a world of rocks and battlements.

The same monarch who had ordered Pena to be built had also caused the restoration to their original condition of these mediæval defences, with the result that, even now, in pacing parts of them, you might expect to encounter men-at-arms round fifty corners, or the clash of weapons to resound from distant outposts. The silence, on this day of mist and drip, was almost eerie, as we climbed, unguided, through a labyrinth of ways, and kept attaining what looked like the topmost pinnacle, only to find it merely an outlying tower, and the central stronghold elusive above our heads. Our sole companions were a few little furtive birds.

There is a sepulchre in the castle woods which encloses the remains of Moorish and Christian combatants, slain in a struggle for the fortress long ago. It is surmounted by both cross and crescent, and was erected—as such impartiality would suggest—centuries after the affair, when the bones of the "unknown soldiers" of both communions were laid bare by the workman's pick. Taking it all in all, this Moorish Castle, high above Cintra in the mists, would be a desolate spot to have to spend the night in; and we had one anxious moment when, in the evening gloom, we reached the big gate

* A peculiar feature of this part of Portugal—flat chimneys, with a slit in the top.—AUTHOR.

which had clanged so loudly at our entrance. But it yielded to our pull.

* * *

All up the coast of Portugal—but at widely separated intervals—there are *praias*, or little seaside places, those nearer Lisbon and Oporto thronged in summer by people escaping from the stuffiness of those din-tormented cities, but nearly all, in winter, empty save for the fishermen and their families to whom, properly, they belong. On the sheltered Estoril bit of coast, which extends along the northern shore of the Tagus estuary—the *Costa do Sol* of the tourist-agencies, and it is aptly called so—these resorts are permanent, their original avocations forgotten or overlaid. Indeed, the whole 15-mile stretch from Lisbon to the rocky point beyond Cascaes has now become a "Riviera" strip, redeemed from banality only by the sun, and by its colouring. Cascaes itself remains of abiding loveliness. Fort, streets, gamboge houses, market-place, lateen-sailed fishing-fleet, crammed into a dent in the rocky shore, leave it no room for ugliness. At Estoril—impudently pretty—the picturesque has faded with the advent of casinos and grand hotels. The little old church and orphanage look out of place in these surroundings, notwithstanding that their roofs of sun-baked pantiles, the tone of a Franciscan's habit, are in the proper texture of the country.

If you seek diligently, too, at Estoril, you will find the "fort," down by the foreshore, which is no bigger than a fives-court. Cracked and crumbling, its door is barred and bolted (it still may count as a "defence-work"!), the corbels at its corners are choked with dusty weeds, and over its entrance you just may read its mid-17th-century date. And another mediæval fort, not far away, is that of St. Julian, which flys the red-and-green flag of Portugal. It still holds a garrison (Heaven help them, in the summer, for discomfort!) and was of importance in the time of Wellington, being,

indeed, at one period the *point d'appui* in case of an evacuation of Torres Vedras.

All this *Costa do Sol* is crowded, be the season what it may. But the other *praias* are as primitive in winter as anyone could wish, and their shops and hotels mere empty adjuncts to the fishing-villages. A beautiful one is Praia das Maças, on the Atlantic, where the little Colares river runs out through gleaming sand, and the rocks have been scooped and twisted by the gales into curious shapes, like pre-historic monsters.* From the headlands you look out, of a winter's day, into mist and boiling surf, for it is a shallow coast and the wind blows constantly from seawards. The great green combers come in streaked with brown, and their white tops flecked with it, and the spindrift stinging off the water, a mixture of sea and sand.

II.—Towards Coimbra

Journeying in Portugal affords matter for bewilderment. That the countryside has improved out of all knowledge as a result of the virtual Dictatorship no one who knew it after the first years of the Republic—and for long before it—will deny. Arid it still looks, superficially; but the aridity is now streaked with the green of crops, and even pasture. The abounding peasantry, though obviously very poor, seem cheerful and robust; and their behaviour towards strangers is courteous and correct.

But, what has happened to their religion—or, rather, to the official practice of it? Why are those mighty shrines and temples sterile and void of meaning?

It would be difficult to describe the feelings with which one enters Mafra, Alcobaça, Batalha, Thomar—Portugal's pious glories—from plains which for miles they dominate—and finds them empty! Empty of

* Gate-posts at Estoril and other places along the coast are often formed from these honeycombed bits of boulders. I have never seen this elsewhere.—Author.

worshippers, that is to say—empty of soul. In corners of some you will find workmen, busy at restoration, sorely needed after lean years of neglect; but a restoration only of the body. Colossal Mafra is now merely barracks and museum. Alcobaça, noble *ne plus ultra* of Cistercian piety, has Mass said in it " on occasion," at an inconspicuous side altar. Batalha, the golden limestone glory of old Portugal, is pagan far more than Christian.

They would be sorely puzzled if they could return now, those kings and warriors who lie buried (when they have been left in peace) in their great tombs in these big cathedrals which they had built for worship. There was João V, who caused Mafra to arise in fulfilment of his vow that on the birth of an heir to his throne he would make of the poorest monastery in his realm the most magnificent. For the bells of one carillon alone he sent to the Flemish bellfounders double the required sum in advance, because they had demurred at the munificence of the order, doubting his ability to pay. In Alcobaça the mitred-abbot ruled over a thousand monks, who offered Mass continuously; and on these altars which are now almost meaningless the Host was exposed for perpetual adoration. João I, on the spot where, in a great battle, he had freed Portugal from the domination of Castile, founded Batalha, in 1388; and for centuries afterwards his successors added splendours to it. The convent-castle of Thomar, once the holiest spot in Portugal, home of the Templars and of the knightly Order of Christ, which for one period of close on 50 years had Henry the Navigator for Grand Master, is now inhabited (where it is not used as a barrack) by a few wan missionaries, who train half-caste youths for Africa. If these great beacons of the country, after long neglect, are now being restored, or having their decay arrested, their light is not re-lit.

Is it, one wonders, ordained that regeneration—the refuelling, to carry on the metaphor—must come from

underneath, now that the fire has died out at the summit? Must perception of the spiritual, as of the merely physical, beauty of the great cathedrals be worked up to, over again—through the home, the village church, the chastened schoolmaster? It will be a terribly long process.

Sometimes, in thinking out the problem of these "secularized" temples, one comes near to the lame conclusion that to preserve the Church from spoliation one must keep her buildings poor and ugly—the stark conventicles of Dissent and Nonconformity—and herself as needy as is compatible with a bare existence. For, when she gets rich the despoiler and the opportunist come and grab her substance: when her buildings remain beautiful, in an ugly world, they are turned by the "emancipated" into museums, or smashed and mutilated by the barbarian!

And, another train of thought need not be elaborated here. It is concerned with the hedges and ditches, the highways and byways, into which not only *Portuguese* preachers may have to go, before they repopulate the cathedrals.

Of course, the Peninsular War, scarcely less than the anti-clerical riots of last century, did enormous damage to the shrines of Portugal; and for many acts of vandalism the French must bear the blame. In Alcobaça the early 19th-century organ replaces the famous one which they destroyed in 1810. The lovely detail on the tombs, representing the highest attainment of 14th-century craftmanship, depicting scenes from the Passion and other sacred subjects, they barbarously mutilated; while they looted the Chapel of the Relics, and left it empty. In Batalha the royal escutcheons were effaced. In Thomar the finest stalls in Portugal were used as firewood. Yet, though it is customary now for guides and guide-books to blame the French for all, it is to be feared that one, at any rate, of the acts of sacrilege—

if Napier is to be believed—must be laid at the door of our own countrymen.*

* * *

After you have traversed all day those interminable roads of Portugal, visited the great cathedrals, stopped for a meal at such a place as Caldas da Reinha, and for petrol at Pombal (where the bust of the famous Marquis, in the market-place, bears as his second exploit —the first was the restoration of Lisbon after the Earthquake—the legend " *Expulsao dos Jesuitas* " !) you arrive at Coimbra (the old capital) in the evening. With us it was a winter's evening, and the lights of the old university city were mirrored below us in the Mondego as we descended the final hill.

All of the city, except for a few buildings, is on the river's northern bank, and looks back in the direction whence you have come from Lisbon. Coimbra, small, compact and very steep, is crowned by the buildings of its University, whose black-robed students, gracefully draped with toga-cloak flung across one shoulder, and wearing their hair plentifully oiled and crinkled, and their demeanour preternaturally grave, pace and re-pace its streets. To one of their number, who came forth courteously to offer to show us something of his Alma Mater, and who did so with efficiency and charm, are hereby thanks. Here, again, the Bishop's palace turned into a museum (filled with confiscated valuables) and the University chapel (in which, our student-guide informed us, until recently the recipients of degrees heard Mass on the morning of the ceremony, " but, of course, do not do so now ") attest to the disappearance of the older

* " The French have, however, been accused of crimes which they did not, and could not, commit. . . . They have been charged . . . with the mutilating of John the First's body in the convent of Batalha . . . whereas the body of that monarch had been wantonly pulled to pieces, and carried off by British officers during the retreat to the lines."—Napier's " Peninsula War," Book XII., Chap. 3.

Neither guides nor guide-books say anything about this, however, and the tomb has the appearance of being intact.—AUTHOR.

order. The newer was exemplified in the groups of skittish damsels of the Law Course, chaffing the grave male undergraduates in the intervals of lectures. It was a corrective to descend by some time-worn steps to the *Sé Velha*, the old cathedral, and Portugal's best example of the Romanesque. Fortress-like it stands there, looking back on its eight centuries.

* * *

The Mondego has a special place in the affections of the Portuguese because, though it flows from east to west, it still contrives to fit within their borders, being the only considerable stream to do so. To manage this feat of compression in a country which is nowhere more than that across it has to dispose its 130 miles in a long and narrow loop, flowing for some 30 miles north-east and north from its source in the Estrela mountains, and then bending round south-west; and a point some 50 or so miles from where it rises is less than 20 miles in a straight line.

It is a deep and mainly unhurrying stream, which brings down with it such a prodigious quantity of silt that in several places along its course old houses are buried to a depth of many feet, and some, near Coimbra, have entirely disappeared. Downstream from that city a level road takes you for 30 miles through an inundated delta, amid rice fields, to Figueira da Foz, that little port on the surf-barred coast where Wellesley landed his army for the 1808 campaign. Here, again, the primitive fishing village of those days has been smothered by a modern "resort," which in winter is practically empty. The tiny fort, in the river's mouth, which the British occupied during the five momentous days of landing, may still be seen, bearing a grandiloquent national inscription.

Upstream from Coimbra a beautiful drive takes you to the battle-mountain of Bussaco, following the river's windings by the northern bank. The deep, vine-clad valley, in which you see scarcely a human habitation,

has doubtless changed but little since the days when Wellington and Massena fought and manœuvred for the crossings. Certainly the long boats, raised at the stem and stern, which we saw being forced upstream by dint of sails and poles, can have altered nothing.

We saw Bussaco in rain and mist, and the point upon its ridge which should have shown us the Estrela ranges to the east, the Caramulos to the north, and to west and south-west Coimbra and the line of sand dunes marking the Atlantic, showed us practically nothing. Only in the evening, after we had rested in the flamboyant great hotel which they have built on the site of the former Royal palace, which itself arose on the foundations of an ancient monastery (they still point out the cell in which Wellington snatched a few hours' sleep before the battle—it had doors front and back, as he declared he must always have a "bolt-hole"—and the tree beneath which his horses stood during part of the fateful day) only then, after rain had fallen steadily since early morning, did the sky clear and the sun come out. We were able to identify from our map the long north-eastern spurs up which Massena's columns swarmed to the attack, and to appreciate the heroism which had so nearly carried an impregnable position. A graceful monument, unveiled (as one of his last official acts) by the late King Manoel on the centenary of the battle, stands near the point at which one of these spurs takes off from the parent ridge.

Poor Manoel! They commemorate him now, in the Palace Hotel, by reserving his Royal suite for honeymooning couples of the rich *bourgeoisie* from Lisbon.

* * *

That spirit—part tragic, part sentimental, and only very slightly humorous—which the Portuguese call "*saudade*," and which they say pervades the national character, is never very far to seek, even on causal study. The peasants one meets in the course of travel

seem far too intent on earning their bread by the sweat of their swarthy brows to spare time even for curiosity. Spoken to, they are responsiveness itself; but they do not obtrude opinions.

Of an evening, you will meet them coming in crowds from the fields, or out of the market-towns, in the direction of their homes—men in one group, women in the other—proceeding on foot at a good pace. In the country between Coimbra and Cintra the majority of the men still wear the coloured "stocking-cap" in preference to that dingy article of cloth which is the uniform of civilization, exceptions being the comparatively few who ride on shaky "push-bikes." Sometimes the groups move to the music of a pipe—thin, melancholy music which matches their surroundings.

Any study of the country's monuments, or superficial reading of its poetry, will furnish instances of the "*saudade.*" Back in Alcobaça we had seen the splendid tombs of Pedro I and Inez de Castro, arranged with their effigies foot to foot, so that at the Resurrection the first object to meet the kingly eyes should be the form of his beloved; and the story of *their* romance and tragedy has given to Camoens's poetry its most moving theme. Here in Coimbra one of those infrequent houses on Mondego's southern bank is the Quinta das Lagrimas, or "Country-place of Tears," where Inez was done to death; and close at hand is a ruined chapel, silted to the level of the aisle-vaults, in which she had hurried burial.

Later, when her accusers had reflected, and her lover —now King—had cleared her name, her body was exhumed, clothed in the richest garments, and *enthroned beside the King to receive the homage of the nobles.*

Quinta das Lagrimas—exhumation—enthronement—homage: the "*saudade*"! If they were capable, in Portugal, of cruelties, they had a nice sense of nomenclature and phrases—and an overpowering taste in penance!

William Cobbett

By W. J. Blyton

WILLIAM COBBETT died a hundred years ago last month. Only to-day I was in the house where he was born, the Jolly Farmer inn, Farnham, Surrey, and the churchyard where he rests (at last) from Rural Rides and libel actions and swashbuckling prose and agitation. Between getting born in the one and buried in the other he wandered far, performed much and uttered still more.

In him, behold the Englishman taking himself wilfully, following his nose like a setter, going by his likes and dislikes. Views and style are the man; like a west wind at gale force—a little given to over-statement and shouting you down, but his uproar is a healthy uproar. And it is *about* something. A hundred years after, we are again confronted by Cobbett's question: to go back to freedom or forward to slavery. So it is not merely because he bird-nested and followed hounds up to the gate of my farm where I write, that I am interested in him. Rather because, as Chesterton somewhere says, the empty chair of Cobbett is more significant than the throne that Victoria ascended. "With him died the sort of democracy that was a return to Nature, which only poets and mobs can understand. After him, Radicalism is urban—and Toryism suburban. From the time when the first shout went up for Wilkes to the time when the last Luddite fires were quenched in a cold rain of rationalism, the spirit of Cobbett, of rural republicanism, of English and patriotic democracy, burned like a beacon."

So dissimilar a man as Shelley, I see, in his letters home from Italy, is continually asking for Cobbett's latest book or speech or action. The man was a Parliament in himself. From my fields I see all day Crooksbury Hill where he snared magpies—but anyone by opening a book of his may get the essential Cobbett:—

"Lord Carnarvon told a man in 1820 that he did

not like my politics. What did he mean by my *politics?* I have no politics but such as he *ought* to like. To be sure I labour assiduously to destroy a system of distress and misery: but is that any reason why a *Lord* should dislike my politics? However, dislike them or like them, to them, to those very politics, the Lords themselves *must come at last.*"

Undoubtedly, as W. H. Hudson said, he talked like that, just as he wrote and as he spoke in public: "his style, if style it can be called, being the most simple, direct and colloquial ever written. And for this reason, when we are aweary of the style of the stylist, where the living breathing body becomes of less consequence than its beautiful clothing, it is a relief and refreshment to turn from the precious and delicate expression, the implicit word sought for high and low and at last found—to go from it to the simple vigorous unadorned talk of 'Rural Rides.' A classic—and as incongruous among classics as a farmer in his leggings or stout boots would appear in a company of fashion. The powerful face is the main thing. Harsh and crabbed as his nature no doubt was, and bitter and spiteful at times, his conversation must yet have seemed like a perpetual feast of honeyed sweets to his farmer friend (Blount). Doubtless there was plenty of variety in it . . . and politics would come round again and a fresh outburst from the glorious demagogue in his tantrums.

"At eight o'clock Cobbett would say good-night and go to bed, and early next morning write down what he had said to his friend, and send it off to be printed in his paper. That, I take it, is how 'Rural Rides' was written, and that is why it seems so fresh to us to this day."

But how did Heine, of all men, see Cobbett? Granted that Heine was an artist and poet living on his nerves' super-sensitive, not an open-air man: still his verdict is oddly at variance with this of our naturalist. Much as he, too, disliked the type of aristocracy, clergy or moneyed man whom Cobbett attacked, to him Cobbett

was a Philistine with six fingers on each hand, and the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam. "While I translate Cobbett's words," he adds, "the man himself comes bodily before my mind's eye, as I saw him at that uproarious dinner at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, with his scolding red face and his radical laugh, in which venomous hate mingles with a mocking exultation at his enemies' surely approaching downfall. He is a chained cur who falls with equal fury on everyone whom he does not know, and just because of this incessantness of his barking cannot get listened to even when he barks at a real thief. Therefore the distinguished thieves who plunder England do not think it necessary to throw the growling Cobbett a bone to stop his mouth. This makes the dog furiously savage, and he shows all his hungry teeth. Poor old Cobbett! England's dog!"

Well, but England's dog had far more in him than that—a sense of soil, of situation, of seed and harvest, of weather and landscape, of human dignity and worth among the humble, of a good job well done. The vinegary *persiflage* of the delicate mocker Heine, a rootless man, shall not scare us off the man rooted and terribly in earnest. For us, each shows where the other type is inadequate. Jeremy Bentham (coiner of the phrase "the greatest good of the greatest number") ought by that token to have been an ally of Cobbett's, but the arid old utilitarian could not abide William's inconsistencies (Cobbett admittedly boxed the political compass in his stormy life), nor his choler and forcefulness. So Bentham peevishly said of him, "He is a man filled with *odium humani generis*. His malevolence and lying are beyond anything." But this squares ill with Cobbett's spending and being spent in the attempt to instruct the ordinary able-bodied man how to live happily on three acres and a cow—or thereabouts. His "Cottage Economy" is decidedly an unselfish book, for example, "containing information relative to the brewing of beer, making of bread, keeping of cows,

pigs, bees, ewes, goats, poultry, and rabbits, and relative to other matters deemed useful in the conducting of the affairs of a Labourer's Family; to which are added, instructions relative to the selecting, the cutting and the bleaching of the plants of English grass and grain for the purpose of making hats and bonnets; and also instructions for erecting and using ice-houses after the Virginian manner." His creed was very brief, very earthy, and more convincing than some programmes. He points out at starting that economy is a word very much abused. It does not mean stinginess, but management. It is the families of a country that make a nation; and quality comes before quantity. To achieve quality, "I lay it down as a maxim, that for a family to be happy they must be well supplied with food and raiment. The doctrines which fanaticism preaches, and which teach men to be content with poverty, have a very pernicious tendency, and are calculated to favour tyrants by giving them passive slaves. Let it be understood, however, that the man who, by his own and his family's labour, can supply a sufficiency of food and raiment, and a comfortable dwelling place, is *not* a poor man. . . . In spite of all refinements of sickly minds, it is *abundant living* amongst the people at large, which is the great test of good government and the surest basis of national greatness and security. . . . When cordially united, a father and sons, or a family of brothers and sisters, may, in almost any state of life, set what is called misfortune at definace."

The basis of all is sensible, steady labour—skilled labour; and Cobbett is intent on advising how to set about it. "Is it not," he asks, "much more rational for parents to be employed in teaching their children how to cultivate the ground, feed and rear animals to make bread, beer, bacon, butter, and cheese and do these things for themselves, than to leave them to prowl about the lanes and commons, or to mope at the heels of some crafty, sleek-headed pretended saint, who, while

he extracts the last penny from their pockets, bids them be contented with their misery, and promises them, in exchange for their pence, everlasting glory in the world to come? Poverty never finds a place amongst the blessings promised by God. His blessings are of a directly opposite description; flocks, herds, corn, wine, oil; a smiling land; a rejoicing people; abundance for the body and gladness for the heart." Materialism? Most nations can do with more of it; and until they have, shadowy idealisms should wait. The book is crowded with commonsense points which can be put immediately into practice by anybody who is literate and has a patch of ground and a few pounds saved.

The singular thing is that almost any two pages of his contrive to express the whole varied man. Thus in a specimen taken at hazard here, we have his sentiment, loyalty to place, downrightness, fondness of contrast, and defiance to pomp and power, all in his own idiomatic Saxon:—

"After living within a few hundred yards of Westminster Hall, and the Abbey Church, and the Bridge, and looking from my own windows into St. James's Park, all other buildings and spots appear mean and insignificant. I went to-day to see the house I formerly occupied. How small! It is always thus: the words large and small are carried about with us in our minds and we forget real dimensions. When I returned to England in 1800, after an absence from the country parts of it sixteen years, the trees, the hedges, even the parks and woods, seemed so small! It made me laugh to hear the little gutters, that I could jump over, called rivers! The Thames was but a 'creek'! But when, in about a month after my arrival in London, I went to Farnham, the place of my birth, what was my surprise! Everything was become so pitifully small. I had to cross, in my post-chaise, the long and dreary heath of Bagshot. Then at the end of it, to mount a hill called Hungry Hill; and from that hill I knew that I should

look down into the beautiful and fertile vale of Farnham. My heart fluttered with impatience, mixed with a sort of fear, to see all the scenes of my childhood. There is a hill not far from the town called Crooksbury Hill which rises up out of a flat in the form of a cone, and is planted with Scotch fir trees. Here I used to take the eggs and young ones of crows and magpies. This hill was a famous object in the neighbourhood. It served as the superlative degree of height. Therefore the first object that my eyes sought was this hill.

"I could not believe my eyes! Literally speaking, I for a moment thought that the famous hill was removed and a little heap put in its stead; for I had seen in New Brunswick a single rock, or hill of solid rock, ten times as big and four or five times as high! The post-boy, going downhill, and not a bad road, whisked me in a few minutes to the Bush Inn from the garden of which I could see the prodigious sandhill where I had begun my gardening works. What a nothing!

"But now came rushing into my mind all at once my pretty little garden, my little blue-smock-frock, my little nailed-shoes, my pretty pigeons that I used to feed out of my hands, the last kind words and tears of my gentle and tender-hearted and affectionate mother! I hastened back into the room. If I had looked a moment longer I should have dropped. When I came to reflect, what a change! I looked down at my dress. What a change! What scenes I had gone through! How altered my state! I had dined the day before at a Secretary of State's with Mr. Pitt, and had been waited on by men in gaudy liveries. I had had nobody to assist me in the world. No teachers of any sort. Nobody to shelter me from the consequences of bad, and no one to counsel me to good behaviour. I felt proud. The distinctions of rank, birth and wealth, all became nothing in my eyes; and from that moment (less than a month after my arrival in England) I resolved never to bend before them."

The passage is characteristic. Always he sees the object as though he and it were new-born. Certain men and doctrines, however, he sees otherwise—through a mist of exhilarating temper :—

" Pitt's false money. Peel's flimsy dresses. Wilberforce's potato diet. Castlereagh's and Mackintosh's oratory. Walter Scott's poems. Walter's and Stoddart's paragraphs, with all the bad taste and baseness and hypocrisy which they spread over this country; all have arisen, grown, branched out, bloomed and borne together; and we are now beginning to taste of their fruit."

Or this : " I once proposed to the copyholders and other farmers in my neighbourhood that we should petition the Bishop of Winchester, who was lord of the manor, to grant titles to all the numerous persons called trespassers on the wastes; and also to give titles to others of the poor parishioners who were willing to make, on the skirts of the wastes, enclosures not exceeding an acre each. This I am convinced would have done a great deal towards relieving the parishes, then greatly burdened by men out of work. This would have been better than digging holes one day to fill them up the next. Not a single man would agree to my proposal ! One, a bull-frog farmer (now, I hear, pretty well sweated down), said it would only make them saucy ! And one, a true disciple of Malthus, said, that to facilitate their rearing children was a harm ! This man had ten or a dozen children. *I will not mention names*, but this man will now perhaps have occasion to recall what I told him on that day ! "

His page is sprinkled with good things in passing, like this : " Women in abundance appear to think that loaves are made exclusively by the baker as knights are made by the King."

And this, concerning how to make candles and rushlights at home :—" You may do any sort of work by this light; and, if reading be your taste, you may read the foul libels, the lies and abuse, which are

circulated gratis about me by the 'Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,' as well by rushlights as you can by the light of taxed candles; and, at any rate, you would have one less evil; for to be deceived and to pay a tax for the deception are a little too much for even modern loyalty openly to demand."

You never know where to have him, with the summer lightning of his wit and wrath—as lively when it misses as when it hits. Hazlitt's fine essay on him fairly sums up his virtues and his vices; who better than Hazlitt, prone to the same, could delineate them? "He is never tedious—he likes himself and his subject too well. He never tires us, even of himself, for he never runs to lees, but is always setting out afresh on his journey, clearing away some old nuisance and turning up new mould. We feel delighted, rub our hands and draw our chair to the fire, and know it will be something new and good, manly and simple. As a partisan no one can stand against him. With his brandished club, like Giant Despair in the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' he knocks out their brains; and not only no individual, but no corrupt system could hold out against his powerful and repeated attacks, but with the same weapon, swung round like a flail, that he levels his antagonists, he lays his friends low. If only his blows were steadily directed to one object, no unpopular minister could live before him. 'He has the back-trick simply the best of any man in Illyria.' He naturally butts at obstacles as unicorns are attracted to oak trees. He is not a fee'd, time-serving, shuffling advocate (no man could write as he does who did not believe himself sincere). He is a self-taught man, and has the faults as well as excellences of that class of person in their most striking and glaring excess. Men of a learned education do not mistake an old battered hypothesis for a vestal. His ideas are served up hot and hot, like pancakes. Fresh theories give him fresh courage. He is not wedded to his notions, not he. He has not a Mrs. Cobbett among all his opinions.

The art of prophesying does not suit Mr. Cobbett's style—he has an ill knack of fixing names and times and places. Finally, he must lay on all the blows and take none."

Chambers' "Encyclopædia of Literature," contemporary with him, I see asserts that as M.P. for Oldham he sat at Westminster after the Reform Bill but was not successful as a public speaker—adducing the reason, and a very odd one it is, that he was "not consistent," as though that ever tripped up a platform orator. But Hazlitt avers that "he speaks almost as well as he writes," and that "the only time I ever saw him he seemed to me a very pleasant man—easy of access, affable, clear-headed, simple and mild in his manner, deliberate and unruffled in his speech, though some of his expressions were not very qualified. His figure is tall and portly. He has a good, sensible face—rather full, with little gray eyes, a hard square forehead, a ruddy complexion, with hair gray or powdered; and had on a scarlet broadcloth waistcoast with the flaps of the pockets hanging down, as was the custom for gentleman-farmers in the last century or as we see it in the pictures of Members of Parliament in the reign of George I. I certainly did not think the less favourably of him for seeing him."

It is instructive to contrast that with Heine's and Bentham's quasi-hostile impressions of the man. To conclude, I may cite the verdict of an acute living critic, Mr. Leonard Woolf, in welcoming selections from Cobbett for use in schools:—

"First among Cobbett's virtues I place his English style. I cannot imagine any English prose more suitable to be given as a pattern and model to the ordinary man and woman. If England ever becomes a civilized country, 90 per cent. of the population will write like William Cobbett. His English is plain, absolutely unaffected, vigorous and supple. He knows instinctively not only exactly what he wants to say, but also the words which will most naturally and harmoniously

express his meaning. There are far greater prose-writers than he is, but no one, I believe, has ever written sentences which are more perfectly in keeping with the peculiar genius of the English language. (It is because this faculty is natural and unconscious in him that I say that in an English Utopia we ordinary persons would all write like Cobbett). When you read a paragraph of Cobbett, all you can say is: 'Well, that simply *is* English'; you cannot say the same of Sir Thomas Browne or of Milton or of many far less Latinized prose writers.

"Cobbett seems to me to get into his sentences something of the English country and the English climate as well as of the English language and the English character. . . . He belongs to the same breed as Dr. Johnson. His opinions were nearly always prejudices, often grotesque prejudices, and yet, even when most grotesque, always springing in a peculiarly English way from a subsoil of native 'common-sense.' When Cobbett writes that the trade of shoemaker 'numbers more men of sense and of public spirit than any other in the kingdom,' I feel a little glow of smiling pleasure, just as I do when Dr. Johnson remarks that all foreigners are fools. It is impossible not to feel affection for a man who holds Cobbett's curious view of shoemakers or Dr. Johnson's of foreigners. And when one happens to share his prejudices, as for instance his hatred of sham Gothic arches or fir-trees or paper-money or war, then the blunt honest vigour with which he expresses them is very refreshing. The worst of Cobbett is that he always has someone or something which he wants to abuse and beat and bully."

Do you ever long to strike out for yourself in life, and force your way through drift and second-hand opinion and dull conventionalism to clear water and an original way of existing? Then read both Cobbett and Cobbett's life: they are a good example of what such independence brings—and costs.

The English Daily Press

By Jane Soames

THERE are I suppose two useful ways of judging the Press; by what it says and by what it doesn't say; and the striking thing about the English Press is its uniformity in both cases. The whole daily Press of England says substantially the same thing about what it reports; all the newspapers put the same degree of emphasis upon sport, upon film stars, upon royalty and the other amusement features which make up the bulk of its matter, they contain what purport to be expressions of opinion, but which in actual fact differ surprisingly little, and maintain unbroken silence upon matters which it is decided not to mention. The circle is complete, there are no "revelations"; with only the most unimportant and rare exceptions the whole Press not only reports and emphasizes but omits the same things. As a result to any educated foreign reader the English Press is very dull, and it is dull because it is uniform and makes little or no appeal to the intelligence.

To attempt to give any explanation for this state of affairs is beyond the scope of these lines, and indeed it may be and often is stated, with some appearance of justification, that if certain facts and certain opinions do not appear in the Press that is because the public does not want them. But in reality it would be much more nearly true to say that the public has no choice. It does not lead the Press, but is led by it—and to a great extent educated also. If it does not like what it gets its only effective method of protest is that of competition, but newspapers must either be supported by very considerable subsidies or make a profit out of advertising, and such enterprise is beyond the resources of all but a very few. Outside certain very narrow limits the public has in actual fact to take the Press as it finds it. Journals d'opinion can and do find support as weekly or monthly publications, but the habit of them has never been strong

in England; the enormous majority read daily papers only, and their importance in the provision of news and the formation of opinion is hardly affected by any other source. Broadcasting has made very little difference to them, for in this country it is official, and foreign news and opinion on the air is available only to very few because of the difference of language.

The most biased critic cannot fail to admit that the news service of the daily Press is excellent, the proof (if one were needed) is that it is quoted all over the world. The newspapers have almost unlimited money at their disposal; their reports are quick and accurate in the sense that they seldom mis-state matters of fact, but are all too often denuded of that commentary which would alone make them intelligible. For there can be no such thing as wholly unbiased reporting, and if there were it would not be worth reading. The bias is there, whether it is openly expressed or merely implied in manner and emphasis and omission. Where would be the value of a report of a revolution in Greece which did not make clear what the revolutionaries were aiming at, what chance they had of achieving their object, why the revolution had broken out at such and such a moment, the position and principles of the Government as opposed to those of the revolutionaries, the influence of foreign powers upon the situation and its interest to ourselves? Yet I think it would be difficult to write an intelligible account meeting all these points based solely upon the reports in the English Press of the late happenings in Greece. One would obtain a mass of detailed day to day information as to the movements of troops and warships and the pronouncements of various leading figures, but very little as to the financial resources of either side, or where they came from, the part played by foreign powers, or the general state of opinion in the country itself and its apparent cause. One would find oneself in the end with so many telegrams based upon the famous dictum " news not views," that it would be hard to make sense of them;

for after all in the last analysis news is of no value without views, and indeed does not exist, as the Catholic Church, (and after it the Communist followers of Karl Marx) have pointed out. The result would I think be that a student of these reports would be struck certainly by the accuracy and detail of what they put in, but still more by the enormous quantity of relevant matter which they left out.

And this factor of omission, which necessarily exists, operates also as a very powerful selector: a great deal happens that is not simply mentioned in brief, given a one-sided aspect, or reported without comment—but does not appear at all. It is just passed over in silence. A few periodicals with a small circulation may contain some references, the foreign Press may expound the matter at the utmost length and from the most diverse points of view, but the great British public simply does not hear of it. We are not told of the recent and violent campaign against this country in the Press of the United States; *The Times* (which claims to be the greatest newspaper in the world) has no Moscow representative, and its readers have to be content with the scraps of news about Russia gleaned by "our Riga correspondent"; we are not told when members of the Royal family have been ill received on official visits; we are not told how many trials for murder take place every year, the proportion of convictions and acquittals and the number of sentences of capital punishment carried out, nor in how many cases of murder the police fail to find the criminal at all; and in the recent full reports of the celebrations of the King's Jubilee everything possible has been done to minimize and camouflage the very striking abstention of the Irish Free State, it has hardly been mentioned.

There are a vast number of things that we are not told, and one of the reasons is that no real opposition Press exists in England. There is undoubtedly a difference between the *Daily Herald* and the *Morning Post*, chiefly due to the different classes of society to

which they address themselves; but neither oversteps the boundary which divides tepid comment from real criticism, and neither reports facts which are not mentioned by the other. English readers would be astounded if they opened their newspapers one morning and found anything like the free comment upon personalities which prevails across the Atlantic, the open incitement to revolt and violent criticism of the Army which appears daily in the *Humanité*, or the strongly worded and documented attacks upon political opponents which are characteristic of the whole French Press. For in this country we are never told why prominent people are given their posts, or by whom; by what methods well-known persons have made their money, and above all are we totally unaccustomed to anything like real attack on the Government, its personnel, policy and methods.

We have become accustomed to expect uniformity in both news and opinions; if any faint reflection of the free discussion of private conversation appeared in the Press it would be thought very dangerous—and yet the real danger lies in the fact that the majority do not realize the position. It is as though the British public were treated as one would treat an adolescent under instruction, to whom one would give certain information and impart certain opinions without qualifying either by a full exposition of different points of view or possibly dangerous knowledge. But adolescents grow up; the British public is not allowed to do so.

It is easy to defend the reticences of the English Press; the arguments for the law of libel as it now stands are familiar to everyone, and the danger to the stability of society which lies in free criticism and the uncensored reporting of events quite apparent—there is no need to elaborate such considerations. England's great strength undoubtedly lies in the fact that she presents a homogeneous and united front to the whole world, that she can go through crises like that of the mutiny of the Navy

a few years ago, the General Strike and the abandonment of the Gold Standard without anything remotely resembling panic or even widespread public uneasiness. On all such occasions the Press unites unanimously to minimize the dangers of the situation, to put the facts which it gives in their best colours, to suppress other facts either entirely or until such time as their significance be no longer paramount, and to gloss over the whole position by a mass of pseudo-patriotic self-praise: England standing the Strain—Great Britain the admiration of the Whole World—British Pluck and Self-Possession pull us Through—and so on. And it would be blind folly and prejudice to deny that the method can be defended by results. Great Britain has weathered the most dangerous crises and come better out of a bad situation than many expert observers at one moment thought possible, and it is not the object of these lines to belittle the part which the Press may have played in such recovery, but rather point out that there are disadvantages in its present character which are less clearly appreciated.

A well-known novelist has just published a book* the title of which I thought very striking: "We Have Been Warned." But have we? I think that statement when applied to the daily Press embodies a very dangerous fallacy, for I do not think it is true. We have *not* been warned.

We have not had put before us continually either the facts as to the private characters and fortunes of our rulers (and by this I do not mean the Royal Family), nor daily verbatim translated extracts from the foreign Press which will give us a clear conception of world opinion as it affects Great Britain (how often does one see references to the Japanese Press, or any considerable quotation from that of the United States?); and we have no daily, lively, well-informed and energetic commentary

* "We Have Been Warned" by Naomi Mitchison. Constable & Co.

upon public affairs from the opposition point of view. The scandal of the police toleration of prostitution and street betting is not mentioned, and the large body of public opinion which dislikes the present restrictions upon the sale of intoxicating liquor is not led by a fierce and combative Press campaign, there is no more than an intermittent sham battle in which wooden swords only are drawn and the sharp steel of truth carefully kept in its scabbard. Everything is served up to us with patriotic sauce even though the flavour of the dish may differ slightly, and even where the law of libel does not enter into the case important facts are either omitted or so presented as to be denuded of their significance—and there is no dissentient voice.

The English Press is very remarkable for its influence and its efficiency, but still more for its reticences, and the danger which they present is not realized because it is not generally appreciated that they exist. If it were clearly and definitely stated, well understood, and a matter of common public knowledge, that for reasons of State and in order that the Government be not impeded in its conduct of public business only such facts as were considered by authority to be innocuous were to be published, and no strong or active opposition permitted—then the public would know where it stood, and if it did not like the position could protest. If there were a perfectly free Press, as in France and the United States, with the law of libel modified or abolished, we should have free expression of a great many differing opinions and much information would be presented to us which might well be often twisted to support a particular case—but we should again know where we were, and learn to correlate the information with its source.

But the present character of the English Press corresponds to neither of these hypothetical cases. In England to-day the mass of the population sincerely believes that the Press is uncensored and that what it reports make up the sum of daily significant happenings

and opinions, whereas in its very homogeneity lies the proof that much is unreported, unemphasized, uncriticized, and therefore unknown. For the bare presentation of facts alone is not sufficient to inform public opinion; the emphasis which is placed upon them and the manner of presentation is almost, if not quite, as important. How far the character of our public life influences the Press and determines its tone, how far public indifference is responsible, and whatever other factors there may be, the salient fact is that we are spoon-fed, though the public as a whole does not realize it; and there are those who believe that such a diet may ultimately prove debilitating and consequently dangerous.

Douglas Social Credit—A Reply

By James Bennett

AN article entitled "The Douglas Credit Scheme," by Mr. Richard Ford, appeared in THE ENGLISH REVIEW for June 1935, and the Editor has asked for a reply.

Mr. Ford divides his subject into four main sections. In the first he speaks of the genesis of the Social Credit idea, and mentions cases where Major Douglas has given evidence before official inquiries. In the second he attempts a summary of the Social Credit diagnosis of modern financial disequilibrium. In the third he outlines the Social Credit remedy as he sees it. In the fourth he aims at assessing the value of Social Credit as a "movement." This classification will, roughly speaking, be followed here.

Criticism, unfortunately, is bound to start with the title itself. To describe Social Credit as a "scheme" is to raise immediate suspicions of mental confusion which the article does nothing to allay. Social Credit can be considered under two main aspects: as a fact in the historical development of human society, and as a technical diagnosis of the flaw inherent in the industrial costing system together with a series of proposals in principle, designed to compensate for this flaw with the minimum of dislocation to society. The application of these principles in any given circumstances must clearly depend on a combination of political considerations and applied technique, and no two national or economic units can be expected to present exactly parallel problems either of technique or policy. There are principles of bridge construction, but the engineer does not try to evolve a "scheme" of bridge-building which can be applied, all neat and complete, to the diverse conditions he will be called upon to face.

Douglas has put forward two particular schemes during the past five years, in the following circumstances. The "Draft Scheme for Scotland" was published in 1933 as the result of an exceptional combination of conditions making for publicity. It was, as its name implies, a set of exemplary proposals designed to supplement discussion of general principles. Any or all of its specific provisions might be modified as matters of practical policy dictated. The interim proposals placed before the New Zealand Monetary Commission in 1933 were explicitly advanced, under protest, within a frame of reference which accepted the present costing system as self-liquidating, and consisted essentially in a device for monetizing hidden bank reserves for the benefit of the community.

Douglas has three times given evidence in Canada; in 1923 before the Select Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce at Ottawa; in March 1934 before the Agricultural Committee of the Alberta Legislature; and in April 1934 before the Select Standing Committee at Ottawa again. He declined an invitation to appear before the British Labour Party Committee set up in 1924 to examine his proposals, on the grounds that the personnel was, on the face of it, neither "expert" in practice nor reasonably unbiased; a moment's consideration of such names as Lord Passmore and Messrs. Tawney and Cole should make the reason for this attitude sufficiently clear. In 1930 he was invited to submit a brief to the Macmillan Committee in London, which it will be recalled held its inquiry under terms of reference which explicitly accepted the principle of the gold standard, and which was therefore precluded from considering his evidence in its official report. Mr. Ford says it made "no mention whatever of the Douglas proposals" but forgets, presumably, to explain why.

Coming to what Mr. Ford describes as "the fundamentals of the Douglas analysis" we find, disappointingly enough, nothing of the sort. There are, apart from

such lapses as attacking secondary factors as if they were primary causes, just two ways in which the Social Credit position can be assailed. The first was expressed some years ago by such a well-known economist that pity forbids naming him. He said, " When a man brings me my coffee in the morning, I like to feel that he is bringing it not because he likes to, but because he has to." The result of a National Dividend would be the economic freedom of the individual; the economist knew it, and his case, if his pleasant mental attitude be accepted, would appear to be watertight. The second way is to deny the validity of the technical diagnosis and this, it must be said, quite unequivocally, no one has yet succeeded in doing or even beginning to do effectively, most certainly not Mr. Ford. *Economic Democracy*, published in 1919, was Douglas's first and perhaps most important book. It comprised at least ten major points which for reasons of space may be summarized as follows :—

1. That the sole object of production is consumption, with human labour ancillary to this and at the minimum required for efficiency.

2. That the production problem has been solved by power-drive machinery and the progress of the industrial arts. (Because " Poverty in Plenty " is a platitude in 1935, it should not be forgotten that this was far from being the case when Douglas first drew attention to it.)

3. That all improvements in process should be made to pay a dividend to the community, either in increased product or increased leisure.

4. That financial credit pretends to be, but is not, a reflection of real credit, which is a correct estimate or belief in the capacity of a community to deliver goods and services as, where, and when required.

5. That banks create credit (nine-tenths of the money we use) out of nothing, by writing figures in their ledgers. (The Chairman of the Midland Bank, and the Macmillan Committee, among other authorities, have since endorsed this.)

6. That this credit, which is common property, has been monopolized by financial interests.

7. That this monopoly of credit is a form of hidden government, since political leaders of every party must borrow from the banks to implement their plans; while the prosperity of industry and the economic security of the individual are at the mercy of a small number of financiers who control the expansion and contraction of credit in their own interests. (This refers primarily to the Bank of England, on whom the Joint Stock banks are dependent in matters of major policy.)

8. That, owing to the increase of machine costs in prices, and also the rate at which banks issue and recall their loans, production is tending to increase while consumption shrinks owing to lack of effective demand.

9. That the discrepancy between prices and incomes in every country leads to a struggle for export markets, with grave danger of war. The alternative is unemployment *together with poverty* at home.

10. The constructive proposals to deal with the above situation.

Mr. Ford confines his criticism almost entirely to the A plus B theorem, which is the technical basis of the conclusions drawn in No. 8 of the above summary, and this is quite reasonable since the constructive proposals spring logically from it. It is a pity that he begins by attributing to Major Douglas the idea that the main cause of the shortage of money lies " in the credit function of the banking system in that the issue of credit is not scientifically adjusted to production." On the contrary, Douglas finds in this very function the means of solving a problem hitherto solved only at the expense of transferring to the credit monopoly the credit *power* which could equally well be transferred to the community. Actually the core of the problem, as defined by Douglas, is *factory cost*, a subject hitherto discussed only in terms which did not question the adequate distribution of purchasing power through the productive system.

Mr. Ford states the A plus B theorem correctly up to a point, dividing the price of any undertaking into payments made to individuals in wages, salaries and dividends, and payments made to other organisations, for raw materials, bank charges, depreciation and so on. At this stage, however, he falls headlong into the fundamental error made by almost every critic who has seriously attempted to destroy Douglas's reasoning. In his book, *Credit Power and Democracy*, Douglas used these words: "The *rate of flow* of purchasing power to individuals is represented by A, but since all payments go into prices, the *rate of flow* of prices cannot be less than A plus B, but since A will not purchase A plus B, a proportion of the product at least equivalent to B must be distributed by a form of purchasing power which is not comprised in the descriptions grouped under A."

Mr. Ford omits the vital words "rate of flow" completely from his argument, yet in them lies the essence of the conception of automatically deficient purchasing power, i.e. money in relation to prices. Clearly by such processes as bank overdrafts, export credits, purchase of securities by banks, credits for public works development and expansion of new capital goods and so forth, it is *possible* for sufficient purchasing power to reach consumers so long as these processes can be expanded, such purchasing power being of the type described as "not comprised in the descriptions grouped under A." The point is that this "advance" purchasing power (apart from bank purchase of securities) cannot also be available to liquidate its own series of costs. Furthermore, the recovery of those original B payments for which it acts, as it were, as an "A" proxy, can furnish A payments at some future time (and so become available as purchasing power) only as a direct result of helping to create a fresh series of costs (some of which will also be B costs). In short, if each process in series production is generating costs *at a greater rate* than it is generating purchasing power, there *must* result an automatically increasing shortage of the

latter unless palliatives are applied such as those mentioned above. Any banker or business man will testify that the limits of effectiveness of such palliatives are being more and more rapidly reached. They must, to be effective, be applied at an ever-accelerating rate, and there comes a point at which nothing but war will serve to balance the equation, though even then only for a moment, and at the price of debt which is now increasing, in units of 100 years, as the fourth power of time. (Professor Rautenstrauch, Columbia University.)

The foregoing considerations should enable any reader to criticise Mr. Ford's concrete example for himself, that of a fourpenny loaf. He argues that if the baker's A payments amount to 1d. his payment of 3d. to the miller for flour is not unproductive of purchasing power, since the latter pays out 1d. in wages before passing 2d. to the wheat merchant, who again retains 1d. for A payments before finally paying the farmer. These A costs added together amount to 4d., says Mr. Ford, and this is the cost of the loaf, or, in his own words, " All money paid out eventually becomes consumers' purchasing power again and . . . there is no perpetual deficiency." This, admittedly, is as neat a little example of begging the question as it could well be, and all credit is due to its author. " The purchaser of a loaf of bread," he says, " pays 4d. to his baker." But he omits to say where he gets the 4d. from, since ex hypothesi the baker, miller, etc., are waiting on this fourpence in order *to pay the wages which would distribute it.* In sequence of time his example is impossible.

The importance of this will be more readily apparent when it is pointed out that his example also assumes hand production, and consequently includes no charges for plant, depreciation, maintenance, etc., all B payments which progress in the industrial arts is constantly increasing in relation to A payments. No wonder that he says, at the end of this astonishing example, " The B payments are practically non-existent " !

Just because Mr. Ford, having noted them in general, chooses to disregard them in particular, these B payments, these " accumulations of past spendings over an indefinite period," are far from non-existent. He should ask the baker, the miller, the merchant and the farmer!

The concluding paragraph in criticism of Douglas's diagnosis, dealing with the repayment of bank loans, it is difficult to treat as serious argument. To suggest, as Mr. Ford does here, that the repayment of a bank loan does not destroy its availability as credit since it " puts the bank in a position to make another loan elsewhere " is to introduce two closely related fallacies into as many lines. In reply to both it should at this date be necessary only to quote the Chairman of the Midland Bank: " Every bank loan and every purchase of securities by a bank creates a deposit, and the withdrawal of every bank loan, and the sale of securities by a bank destroys a deposit." If that is not enough, then the Encyclopædia Britannica, " Banks lend by creating the means of payment out of nothing."

The constructive proposals follow logically from the analysis, and are based on the axiom that the cost of production is consumption. That is to say, that the material and energy consumed in converting one thing into another (more useful) thing is the true cost of producing it. It is therefore proposed to calculate the financial cost of goods produced in a given period and of goods consumed in the same period. If the A plus B theorem is correct, the production figures will be greater than the consumption figures and credit can be created by a suitable agency to enable the public to take the surplus production off the market.

This credit can in theory be wholly applied as a rebate or discount, payable to retailers on condition that they reduce their prices to the public by an equivalent amount. In other words, the credit can be used to reimburse retailers for selling goods to the public below cost, thus operating not to give the retailer more than his normal

price, but to enable the public to make their deficient money buy all the goods at a price which has been reduced to fit their pockets. Mr. Ford's argument against "inflation" is fully met, since inflation can be defined as an increased supply of money with a corresponding rise of prices, whereas this device, known as the Compensated Price Discount, provides *a reduction of price.*

Owing to the displacement of human energy by mechanical progress this process is not enough, since it leaves many without the money to pay even the reduced price. By the method of retaining a portion of the surplus credit, thus reducing prices to a less extent, a sum will be available to finance a National Dividend payable to everybody, as a recognition, to put it at its lowest, of the vital importance to producers of *customers with money to buy.*

Mr. Ford is concerned with "the difficulty of fixing prices," but as Social Credit has never contemplated price-fixing the present writer may perhaps be excused from following Mr. Ford into his subjective thicket. His last objection really appears to be the desperate shift of a man driven into a corner. "Statistics for the financial cost of production and consumption are non-existent . . . it is impossible to ascertain the money value of services unless it is considered merely as the money value of the wages and salaries involved." (Why not? That is how the money value of goods should be arrived at.) And apart from the fact, as Major Douglas has shown, that most of the necessary statistics are already available from existing sources such as company balance-sheets, land-registration offices and insurance companies, the Roosevelt Administration in its recently-completed Survey of Potential Product Capacity has surely shown conclusively the futility of such objections.

Mr. Ford's concluding paragraphs, in which he sets out to assess the importance of Social Credit as a movement, are both so inaccurate and so out of date as to leave

no loophole even for faint praise. He suggests that Major Douglas "has no personal organization to propagate his Scheme," but mentions the National Credit Association as a closely related body. In actual fact, Major Douglas initiated in 1933, and is still the active Chairman of the Social Credit Secretariat, with offices at 163A Strand. This organization (which incorporates the National Credit Association) functions through a Board of Directors democratically elected by the movement in Great Britain, each one personally responsible for one department of its activities. The Secretariat also issues a weekly paper, *Social Credit*, and acts not only as the headquarters of the movement in Great Britain, but also as an international advisory bureau and clearing-house of information for the movement overseas. Its activities of recent months have been increasingly absorbed in an Electoral Campaign throughout the country, aimed at getting the voter to pledge himself to vote only for candidates supporting the abolition of poverty and the issue of a National Dividend.

This interesting development is in conformity with the principle enunciated by Douglas, that to develop mass pressure for a *technique* such as Social Credit is impossible and even undesirable, owing to the danger of side-tracking from financial interests, which cannot be expected to give up their dominant position in modern society without pressure from the electorate through the medium of its representatives, to demand *results* and dismiss those experts who are unwilling or incompetent to produce them.

Limitations of space forbid more than a bare reference to Douglas's conceptions of the "cultural inheritance" and the "increment of association," which may together be described as the justification in philosophical terms of the engineer's diagnosis and technique. From the Christian sociological point of view it is no exaggeration to say that Social Credit stands on unassailable ground, and in the last few years this has received recognition

from such diverse quarters as Catholic and Anglican bishops and priests, nonconformist ministers, and distinguished laymen of all denominations. It is a burning political question in New Zealand and Canada, especially in Alberta, where Major Douglas has recently issued a report as Reconstruction Adviser to the Provincial Government. Its influence is widespread and growing in Australia, South Africa, the United States, the Irish Free State, and elsewhere.

In the face of sixteen successive years of indifference, boycott, criticism, and finally open and bitter opposition, it has not been found necessary to change or even modify any part of Douglas's technical diagnosis and basic proposals. Indeed, Social Credit cannot be suppressed, since it rests upon the double basis of recognition of physical facts, and of the supreme value of human personality. It is a fundamental conception of the Social Credit movement that group relationships such as the State are of importance only in so far as they conduce to the well-being and progress of every individual composing them. In consequence, the objective of the movement is not to construct a Utopia (" pace " Mr. Ford), but to enable every member of the community so to utilize this interest in the group inheritance that he may construct for himself an existence according to his own ideas or beliefs. Social Credit is the escape from Utopia.

Four Epigrams

By J. H. F. McEwen

ON ONE WHO WAS UNGENEROUS IN HIS DEALINGS WITH WOMEN

He loved himself, and what there was to spare
of love thereafter was too small to share;
nor was he ever able, to the last,
to give a present or forgive a past.

FULL CIRCLE

In this place was he born, and there he died.
  Strange that they so adjacent should have been,
says one, nor sees the æons that divide,
  and all the weary road that lay between.

HOLY SIMPLICITY AND PROFANE

Cursed be the Fool who in his heart, with pride,
  " There is no God " hath cried.
But blessed, thrice blessed, his folly who in his
  whispers : " There is. "

ERRATIC AIM

My aim is to build Germany anew,
  Herr Hitler said :
and turning on his friends, without ado,
  he shot them dead.

Foreign Affairs

By Sir Charles Petrie

THE past month has witnessed a number of alarums and excursions, but on the whole it has left the international situation better than it found it, even if only because the most woolly of pacifists has had his eyes opened to realities. For this our thanks are principally due to Sir Samuel Hoare, whose speech in the House of Commons on July 11th was a welcome change after the utterances of his predecessor. The new Foreign Secretary knows the background of foreign politics, which Sir John Simon never did, and so can thread his way with far greater confidence through the maze of problems that confronts him. More than once he gave evidence of this in his statement in Parliament, and even those of us who most disagreed with him over India now feel reassured that the Foreign Office is under the control of an experienced statesman who knows his own mind. It is to be hoped that Sir Samuel will be able to impose his views on the Cabinet.

It is also clear that there is no question of divided authority, as appeared probable when the allocation of posts in the new ministry was first announced. By sheer good luck Mr. Eden's stock has slumped at the very moment when his position might have been a cause of embarrassment owing to his anomalous position, and Sir Samuel Hoare, with the more than capable assistance of Lord Stanhope, reigns supreme at the Foreign Office. Henceforth, *wagon-lit* diplomacy should be no serious rival to the real thing.

The General Position

THERE has been an exaggerated tendency to regard the Abyssinian crisis apart from the general situation, and that has led more than one so-called leader of public opinion into serious error. The Anglo-German Naval Agreement has not recommended itself to France, and

there are indications that in the near future the bulk of the French Navy may be transferred to the Channel and the Atlantic, thus leaving the Mediterranean to the care of Italy. In these circumstances it is hardly likely that the French Government will quarrel with Rome for the *beaux yeux* of the Emperor of Abyssinia, whom they have good reason to suppose not to be above a flirtation with Germany.

Yet this is the moment chosen by some of our fire-eating pacifists to suggest that we should quarrel with Italy, our friend since the *Risorgimento*, as the Foreign Secretary aptly reminded the House of Commons. For this country the Mediterranean is a route which must be kept open at all costs, and in view of the revived naval strength of Germany the dominant Power in that sea in the future will be Italy. Those who talk so glibly about stopping this or that would do well to look at the facts. It is as much out of our power to take any effective action as it is against our interests. Those who wish to see Great Britain face the world in arms should have taken care that she was provided with the necessary armaments for the purpose.

The Zeila Offer

IT is against this background that Mr. Eden's offer must be considered. Let it be said at once that it was not so much what was done, as the way in which it was done, that calls for comment. There is a representative of His Majesty in Rome who could easily have found out whether the proposition was one that Signor Mussolini would consider, and so have avoided one of the most humiliating rebuffs that British diplomacy has received for many years. Instead of that, Mr. Eden, with a great flourish of trumpets, is sent to Rome *via* Paris, where he omits to inform M. Laval of the purpose of his mission, and returns with his tail between his legs. The Government Press rapidly had the type " Another Triumph for Mr. Eden," which had been kept standing, broken up.

A settlement of the Italo-Abyssinian dispute might have been cheap at the price of a few acres, but a glance at a map might have told the Cabinet that, apart from anything else, France would not favour the creation of a rival to Djibouti. Furthermore, the offer to cede even the most sparsely populated territory to a slave-owning community like Abyssinia requires a great deal more consideration than it clearly received. The whole affair, not least the leakage of information, is typical of the opportunism and incompetence which have marked the conduct of our foreign policy only too often of recent years, and have revived the old charge of *perfide Albion*.

The Royal Prerogative

THE situation was hardly improved by the cool assertion of Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, in reply to a very proper question by Sir Arnold Wilson, that he was informed that the Royal Prerogative in the matter of the cession of territory had lapsed. Comment upon such an observation, coming from such a source, is needless. It is true that since the cession of Heligoland in 1890 there has been an increasing tendency to seek the consent of Parliament for the alienation of territory in time of peace, but Mr. Balfour, assuredly no friend to the Royal Prerogative, himself admitted that the question was "in a nebulous condition." On the same occasion Mr. Goschen declared that the procedure adopted in connection with the surrender of Heligoland did not involve the proposition "that the assent of Parliament is indispensable to treaty-making or even to a cession of territory." In the year of the Silver Jubilee, the country is in no mood to have the Crown insulted to save the faces of the politicians.

It is true that the territory in question is a Protectorate, but that does not affect the issue. Sir William Anson held that "a Protectorate may be established over territories owned by a number of tribal chiefs, where civilization, if it can be said to exist at all, is in a back-

ward state . . . . Such a Protectorate is hardly distinguishable from the sovereignty which rises from conquest or settlement." In short, it is difficult to know which to reprobate the more, Mr. Malcolm MacDonald's ignorance or his impertinence.

The British Attitude

THERE would be nothing but praise for a practical effort by the British Government to prevent hostilities between Italy and Abyssinia, for peace is very definitely a national interest. The weakness of our position lies in our perpetual oscillation between our reponsibilities as a member of the League of Nations and the dictates of necessity. Successive administrations have endeavoured to run with the national hare and hunt with the international hounds, and now we are confronted with all the inconveniences of this attempt to make the best of both worlds. Unfortunately, too, recent events have greatly lessened British prestige by convincing every foreign Power that in no circumstances will this country do anything.

Unhappily there is a great deal of truth in this belief. Statesmen of all parties, not least that which calls itself Conservative, have united for a period of years in decrying all the sterner virtues, with results which are only too obvious to those who come into contact with public opinion. In official circles one notices a re-awakening to the responsibilities of Empire, but it will require many years' education before the country as a whole responds. The politicians are complaining that the man-in-the-street will not back them in any drastic action, and they are right: but whose fault is it? When Conservative leaders resign from membership of the League of Nations Union, and the Secretary of State for War addresses a few recruiting meetings to fill the depleted ranks of the Territorials, the need for asserting our position in the world will be taken seriously: until then it will continue to be regarded as " another political stunt."

Britain and the Crisis

TWO things are clear, and as a wise man Sir Samuel Hoare has obviously recognized them. The first is that Great Britain will not act alone in the Italo-Abyssinian dispute, and the second is that there is very little chance of the league taking any action. Whether this is a matter for congratulation or regret is beside the point. Either the Emperor of Abyssinia must become as the Sultan of Morocco or the Bey of Tunis, or he must fight, and risk the fate of the Dey of Algiers. If the League wishes to prevent war, the only hope is to persuade the Emperor to adopt the former course.

In either event there are certain British interests to be safeguarded, and they are the sources of the Blue Nile. There is no reason to suppose that Italy has any desire to interfere with this region, but it would save any possibility of friction in the future if an arrangement were reached now between London and Rome. The last thing we want is a Fashoda with Italy. The British Empire is large enough already, but if Abyssinia is to become either an Italian colony or protectorate the Lake Tsana area must be, at the least, within a clearly and defined British " sphere of influence." So far as Great Britain is concerned we are quite content with the existing situation in Abyssinia, but if the League decides otherwise, we must look to our own interests.

French Politics

FRENCH revolutions always take place when they are least expected, and the next one appears unlikely to be an exception. What is happening in France is what has happened in Germany, Italy, and many another country on the mainland of Europe. The parties of the Centre, upon which the Parliamentary System depended for its existence, have grown so weak that they hardly matter, and the Left and Right are facing each other, to some extent in the Chamber, but mostly in the street. As

always, the Radicals have moved to the Left, and have formed, with the Socialists and Communists, what they are pleased to call an anti-Fascist Front : meanwhile the ministry is governing by decree. It is very reminiscent of Italy before Mussolini and Germany before Hitler.

The Right, or " the Leagues " as its organizations are commonly known, is as usual divided. There are the *Action Française, Jeunesses Patriotes, Croix de Feu,* and *Francistes,* and they show little disposition to co-operate, though their aims are much the same. The first is avowedly Royalist, and the last openly Fascist, but it is not clear where the other two stand in the matter of the regime. Colonel de la Rocque, the head of the *Croix de Feu,* has always been studiously vague as to his programme, and when he spoke in London a few months ago his audience went away little wiser than it came. Nevertheless, this reticence has not stopped the steady flow of recruits into his organization.

The Next Step

NEITHER Left nor Right wishes to strike the first blow. The Left believes, probably correctly, that it will obtain a majority at the General Election next year, after which it will have the resources of the State at its disposal for the suppression of its opponents. The Right is angling for the support of the *petite bourgeoisie,* which it will not get if it appears to take the offensive, but of which it is sure if its adversaries do so. Colonel de la Rocque is playing the same game that the future Napoleon III played during the stormy days of the Second Republic.

The ordinary Frenchman is not yet quite convinced of the necessity of a change, and he still hopes that it may prove possible to avoid any violent upheaval, though he is becoming increasingly more doubtful of this. Of one thing there can be no question, and it is that once he becomes convinced that action is necessary he will support the Leagues with a vehemence unknown even in

Italy or Germany. The story of the Second Republic and of the Commune will be repeated, and a Frenchman fighting in defence of his property is a very formidable proposition, as centuries of history prove.

In this connection the views of Monsieur Pierre Gaxotte, which appeared in *Je Suis Partout* a week or two ago, are of special interest. " Il reste que la question de régime va se poser en France exactement dans les mêmes conditions qu'en Italie, qu'en Allemagne, qu'au Portugal, qu'en Autriche, qu'en Hongrie, qu'en Amérique du Sud et autres lieux. C'est un phénomène général, et cela finira chez nous comme cela a fini chez nos plus proches voisins. Le plus tôt sera le mieux."

Greece and Jugo-Slavia

THE wave of Royalist sentiment in Greece is making such progress that the opponents of a Restoration are stopping at nothing to prevent it. One of the stories told to discredit the King is that he signed the death-warrants of the generals and others who were shot in 1922. This is a deliberate lie. So far was he from approving of what was happening that he proposed to leave the country immediately, and only refrained from doing so at the express request of the British and French ministers. That his enemies should now be spreading such a calumny is striking evidence of the difficult position in which they find themselves.

Tribute should, in this connection, be paid to Prince Paul of Jugo-Slavia for the efforts he is making to pave the way for the return of King George II to Athens as a guarantee of stability in the Balkans. In the few months which have elapsed since he took office the Regent has given evidence of a statesmanship, both at home and abroad, of a very high order, and he is exercising a beneficial influence upon every question with which he has to deal. Jugo-Slavia has suffered in the past for lack of a competent statesman, and now she has one it is to be hoped she will give him her full support.

The New Spain

IT is greatly to be regretted that the British Press gives so little prominence to events of real interest and importance abroad. Let a bomb be thrown, and it is at once reported, but if an outstanding book appears it is ignored, unless it is written by a Socialist. A notable example of this is *Cartas a un excéptico en materia de formas de gobierno* by José Maria Pemán (*Cultura Española. 5 Ptas.*) The author is a typical representative of that Right movement in Spain which is working for a national revival along traditional lines. In these pages he shows how republicanism, far from being a step forward, is a step back, and he stresses the need of mankind to-day for that continuity and unity which a hereditary monarchy alone can provide. No one who has any acquaintance with the Spanish language should ignore this book.

Señor Pemán's thesis has recently received confirmation from Senor Gil Robles in a Preface written by the latter to the Spanish edition of M. Tardieu's *La Réforme de l'Etat*, in which the gifted leader of *Acción Popular* and present Minister for War, shows how under the old Parliamentary regime " the political and social Constitutions were in continual disagreement." This is profoundly true, and was the result of the slavish imitation of foreign Constitutions by Spanish statesmen of all parties for many years. Friends of Spain will hope that Señor Gil Robles also agrees with his fellow-countryman's criticism of elective monarchy on the German and Portuguese pattern as " aspirations towards Kingship which have stopped half-way."

A Countryman's Diary

By A. G. Street (Author of "Farmer's Glory")

June 12th.

AND still it rains, but in spite of the weather we started cutting grass this morning. Rain or shine, heavy cut or light cut, early season or late, the first half of June always sees Wiltshire busy at haymaking. The recent rains have improved the bulk of the crop tremendously, but their other effect, the delay in the cutting, will mean a lowering of quality. The weather looks as though there will be precious little hay ricked in June, and one ton of June hay is worth a ton and a half of July's.

June 17th.

Sixty acres of grass cut and rain and thunder every day proved to me once more something which I have known to be true for many years—that the farmer is helpless in the face of Nature. Still experience and my father's teaching and example have together provided me with the best method of dealing with such a difficult position. It is useless to worry about something which you are powerless to alter, and so I did the next best thing, I ran away from the sight of it for a day or two. There is so much of England's farming and our countryside's beauty which I have not yet seen, and so much that I want to see before I die, so after tea to-day my wife and I drove northwards and are sleeping this night at Newent. In common with most people I admired the Cotswold country, but somehow, in spite of its undoubted charm, I prefer to farm in Wilts. To my eye the Cotswold land lacks "guts," and its crops needed the recent rains badly.

June 18th.

Newent to Corwen, via Ross, Hereford, and almost Shrewsbury. Good "gutty" country most of the way,

and, of course, largely grass. Funny how difficult it is to get people to believe you when you tell them that the farming of this island is now, and has been for the past fifty years, largely grass, when it is a plain fact for any traveller to see unless he is wilfully blind. It rained most of the way, but somehow we did not find it an unpleasant journey, for every now and again the sun smiled on us. It occurs to me that only in England during high summer can one find pleasant wet. I like the sight and scent of a wet countryside in summertime. The hedges and trees dripping, the birds piping, the feeling that everything around you is growing and revelling in the rain, and that the whole world is loving it and lipping—lovely word that—with it. Of course, there's that hay of mine at home, but for four or five days my mental policy shall be, "what the eye doesn't see the heart doesn't, or in this case shouldn't, grieve over."

June 20th.

Still in Wales, but propose to get home to-morrow. I take my hat off to the Welsh farmer. His is a nice enough country to look at or to sport in; but for farming give me something a trifle flatter. The Welsh farmer works very hard, and farms extraordinarily well under great difficulties. Little awkwardly shaped, awkwardly placed fields, many of them at a most damnably awkward tilt; and, from what I could discover, most of them at a fairly high rental. Grain, of course, is a very minor thing in his farming, which is about ninety-five per cent. livestock, mainly sheep. Most farm rents carry the right to run so many sheep on the mountain—there is always a mountain at the back of a farm in North Wales. I was informed that the Welsh breed of sheep is being greatly improved in some districts, but as they are I cannot see much wrong with them. They are hardy, their meat is of first-class quality, and they are suited to the country, being able to live and get fat where our south-country

hurdled sheep would starve. More than that they can graze where only the young man in the flying trapeze could join them. It was a common sight to see a ewe and her lamb nibbling happily where one false step would have meant a swift tumble of at least a quarter of a mile. To the credit of the Welsh farmer let me place one other thing. To my Wiltshire eye his farm buildings were but dark hovels, but in them and around them he keeps first-class pedigree stock, horses, pigs and cattle. And if the powers that be would legislate to give him still cheaper feeding stuffs instead of trying to make them artificially dear, he could and would compete successfully with any overseas producer, for, as I say he is accustomed to work very hard for very little return.

June 21st.

Home again, where they tell me that to-day has been the first fine day since we left. In consequence, after supper I drove up to the hayfield. The crop is damaged but not spoilt, and to-morrow if fine we must move it up to the sun and wind. Just one more note on Welsh farming. Wales and its Marches are bigger than the Eastern counties. What a good thing it would be for farming generally if the government could enable the farmers of both districts to exchange visits and so learn something of each other's difficulties and advantages. As it is, East is East and West is West, and rarely those twain do meet. And to a good many people, far too many, British farming is all East.

June 24th.

From wet June to flaming June with a vengeance. Phew! But it's been hot to-day. Still, haymaking is in full swing, and every man and horse and machine on the farm was pressed into service. More and more is the horse becoming a back number in farming. To-day we keep so few and work those few so little than when we want them to do a full day in hot weather they just

cannot do it. Anyway my one horse had more than enough of a light horserake by twelve o'clock to-day. Result, a draw-hitch was fitted to the milk van. Somehow or other when the sun shines everything must be kept moving.

July 9th.

The gap in this diary can be filled quite adequately by one word—haymaking. A fortnight ago, having hired a sufficient number of hands, I though that my haymaking could run satisfactorily without my presence every moment. But somehow it didn't, so once again I became a hundred per cent. farmer for a spell. Somehow it is difficult to delegate the control of one's haymaking or of any other important farming job. That is why farming rarely succeeds as a limited liability company; no matter what the size of the undertaking, its control must be a personal job for one man.

'Here is a book for us all.'—*The Observer.*

To Be a Farmer's Boy

A. G. Street

The author of *The Endless Furrow* and *Farmer's Glory* has at last written the ideal book of practical advice that parents have been demanding for their sons, and that all who wish to work the land, or retire to the country, will find invaluable. 'No sounder advice to prospective farmers was ever given, no more accurate picture of the farm as they will first see it was ever painted.'—*Sunday Times.* 'To be completely practical is almost to be a poet—I should not be surprised if it is the best book he has written.'—*The Observer.* 5/-

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LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

***Edited by* HUGH KINGSMILL**

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Literary Notes

By Hugh Kingsmill

Cervantes as Pimp

SOMERSET MAUGHAM'S "Don Fernando" is reviewed in this issue by Hesketh Pearson, who, when I asked him why he accepted Maugham's theory that Cervantes lived on the immoral earnings of his sisters and daughter, replied: "If you can prove that it is all a lie, go to't and don't mind me."

I cannot prove that Cervantes was not a pimp, and it is also impossible for me to prove that Oliver Cromwell was not Cardinal Mazarin in disguise, that Queen Anne did not write "Gulliver's Travels," and that Wellington, struck with remorse after Waterloo, did not go to St. Helena instead of Napoleon. All I can do is to take the facts as set forth by Mr. Maugham, add one or two he has omitted, state my conclusions, and leave the reader to form his.

Mr. Maugham quotes contemporary evidence to the

effect that each of the two sisters of Cervantes had an affair with a rich man, and that the natural daughter of Cervantes had a child by one man shortly before her marriage with another. On the strength of these facts Mr. Maugham writes: " It is unreasonable to judge a man of one age by the standards of another. A popular author nowadays would think it discreditable to live on the prostitution of his female relations (he would not need to), but he would not hesitate to praise a critic's book in order to get a favourable criticism of his own," and " Her aunts being long past their prime, it seems to have devolved upon her (the daughter of Cervantes)—with Cervantes earning so little by his pen—to keep the home fires burning."

Let us take the aunts first. There is no evidence of any kind that Cervantes profited by the affairs of his sisters. He was a prisoner in Algiers at the time, and they may, of course, have contributed to his ransom, but even Mr. Maugham would allow that a man is not to be called a pimp because, in these circumstances, he does not obtain sworn affidavits from his sisters that their lives have been uniformly chaste since he last saw them. We know nothing else about these sisters except that one of them, twenty-five years after the return of Cervantes from Algiers, was living with him, his wife and his daughter, and contributing to the household expenses by needlework (a fact Mr. Maugham does not mention). As this sister was now over sixty, and the daughter was still under twenty, it would be interesting to learn how Mr. Maugham explains the survival of Cervantes during the weary years when his sister was too old for business and his daughter too young.

The love affair of the daughter occurred when she was over twenty. " It seems to have devolved upon her to keep the home fires burning," Mr. Maugham writes, and then proceeds to tell us that during this affair she lived in rooms provided by her lover, from which one might, if one wished, infer that Cervantes had turned her into

the street with a parental curse. There is, however, no more reason to suppose Cervantes a precisian than a pimp. His daughter was grown up, and he would understand her preferring luxury and caresses to the poverty of his house.

Having exhibited the bare bones of Mr. Maugham's argument, stripped of the narrative charm in which Mr. Maugham excels, I shall conclude with a few remarks on his suggestion that Cervantes, had he lived nowadays, would have been a literary opportunist of the kind Mr. Maugham sketches in "Cakes and Ale."

Cervantes, so Mr. Maugham's reasoning runs, was a popular writer. Popular writers are pimps. There was no money in literary pimping in sixteenth-century Spain, so the female relatives of Cervantes had to come to the rescue.

It is true that Cervantes was a popular writer, after Don Quixote appeared. It is not true either that he possessed any faculty for commercializing his success, or that if he had possessed this faculty he would have remained poor. Lope de Vega, the fashionable dramatist of the day, who felt for Cervantes the hatred of the calculating man of talent for the uncalculating man of genius, made plenty of money. Like most commercially successful writers, Lope de Vega was realistic in affairs and sentimental in his work, whereas Cervantes was idealistic in his conduct and realistic in retrospect. In Dulcinea del Toboso, Cervantes made fun of his own rose-coloured view of women. The Lope de Vegas keep their realism about women for private use, and their sentiment about women for public applause.

Mr. Maugham is more competent to deal with our betters than with his.

Note.—Hesketh Pearson, having read the above remarks, looked thoughtful, and said: "I see what you mean. No pimp would thank Maugham for calling Cervantes one. After all, pimps have their pride."

Christopher Dawson

IN "Religion and the State" (Sheed and Ward, 6s.) Mr. Dawson analyses the modern spirit in politics, and shows that in all its manifestations, from Liberal Capitalism to State Absolutism, it is vitiated by lacking any sense of other than material values. To Mr. Dawson Protestantism, Liberalism and Communism are the three stages by which our civilization has passed from Catholicism to complete secularism, and he has no difficulty in demonstrating that Marx hated the bourgeoisie because they had power, not because they misused it. "Both Communism and Capitalism," he writes, "agree in putting economic things first and in ordering society to an economic end, and consequently they are both far more opposed to Catholicism than they are to one another." A return to the tradition of Christian civilization means, according to Mr. Dawson, a return to a sacred order by which human action is conformed to the divine and eternal law, and not merely regulated by the mechanized system of an absolute state. "The principles on which such a restoration must rest," he adds, "were clearly laid down fifty years ago in the great social encyclicals of Leo XIII."

It is possible that the group of writers in Europe and America, of whom Mr. Dawson is one of the most lucid and penetrating, are the heralds of a great Catholic Renaissance, which will precipitate the fall of the present autocracies throughout Europe, and renew the spiritual life of the world for a long period. Whether the Catholic Church is likely, during this Renaissance, to keep abreast with its most ardent and spiritual members is a question which Mr. Dawson may perhaps think the great social encyclicals of Leo XIII make unnecessary, although he himself writes: "When the Church possesses all the marks of external power and success, then is its hour of danger. . . . ." The materialism which Mr. Dawson finds in the modern world was equally obvious to Luther when he visited Rome.

Winnie the Pooh-Pooh

IN the new edition of " Peace With Honour " (Methuen, 5s.) Mr. A. A. Milne protests wistfully against some remarks I made in these notes when the first edition appeared last autumn. After quoting my opinion that " where Tolstoi, a wrathful prophet, failed, it is unlikely that Mr. Milne, an irritable publicist, will succeed," he continues : " Well, one does one's best. It was the aim of Christ to convert mankind to the truths of Christianity, and the fact that He ' failed ' does not prevent humble men from following in His footsteps. . . . Mr. Kingsmill, murmuring ' Up, Guards, and at 'em ' whenever war is mentioned, continues to wonder what all these agitators are agitating about."

Mr. Milne, who introduces me as " Mr. Hugh Kingsmill in ' The National Review . . .'," seems to picture me as a Colonel Blimp. My criticism of his book, however, derived not from an enthusiasm for war, but from a lack of enthusiasm for Mr. Milne as an analyst of war. I do not question that he is doing his best. It was, indeed, an intuition of this melancholy fact which made me try to discourage him from further misadventures as an evangelist of peace. The mistake of Mr. Milne is in supposing that to do something is necessarily better than to do nothing. He reminds me of a schoolmaster who, when setting us a theme for an essay, used to say : " Remember—quantity, if you can't give quality." This master further resembled Mr. Milne in the kindliness of his disposition, which (herein wiser than Mr. Milne) he did not fray by involving himself in controversies for which he was unsuited. How little suited Mr. Milne is to his intricate task may be judged from his attempt to persuade his readers that it would be as absurd for an Hungarian, whose property had been cut in half by the new Roumanian frontier, to try to regain the family cemetery by force of arms as for the mothers of England to call for a war on France so that our war cemeteries in France may be converted into British territory.

Hector Bolitho

IN "Older People" (Cobden-Sanderson, 10s. 6d.) Mr. Bolitho gives us his reminiscences of a number of distinguished members of a generation older than his own. The publisher tells us on the paper wrapper that Mr. Bolitho has "refused to allow his book to be described as 'reminiscences'," and quotes from a letter in which Mr. Bolitho says:—"I do not wish my book to be accepted as a shower of gossip about great names." While fully appreciating Mr. Bolitho's anxiety to safeguard the dignity proper and perhaps essential to a collaborator with the Dean of Windsor in "The Letters of Lady Augusta Stanley" and "the Later Letters of Lady Augusta Stanley," I am unable to find any other word than reminiscences for Mr. Bolitho's account of his meetings with Mussolini ("his eyes were laughing"), with Mr. and Mrs D. H. Lawrence ("I knew that I had failed even to interest them"), with T. E. Lawrence "One felt a strange protective instinct"), with Lady Forbes-Robertson ("I listened like a Child"), with Marie Tempest ("her anger and determination are part of her demand for perfection"), with Lloyd George ("I came away from Churt glowing with devotion"), with Dean Inge ("Our civilization was criticized and laid bare in two sentences"), with Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch ("A cluster of undergraduates took me for a fool in Cambridge, when I gaped with delight at the spick and span figure of Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch"), and with numerous other celebrities.

This is a light, vivacious entertaining volume of (to be frank) reminiscences.

An Anthropotheosophist

THE ENGLISH SPIRIT. A New Approach through the World Conception of RUDOLF STEINER. By D. E. FAULKNER JONES. (Anthroposophical Publishing Company. 5s.)

RUDOLF STEINER, who died in 1925, was secretary of the Munich theosophical society, but he maintained his independence of theosophic orthodoxy, hazy though that be, by calling himself an antheoposophist. He shared the theosophist predeliction for esoteric doctrine and mystification, and for women with a romantic past. He has written of a prominent member of his society, who had been a friend of Madame Blavatsky, and on whose account Ferdinand Lassale was killed in a duel: "What she said was given a subjective twist, and was often shaped by her fancy, but having allowed for this, one glimpsed the truth through many disguises and one had the revelation of what was indeed a remarkable character."

Steiner held that the history of man falls into clearly marked spiritual epochs—that of the sentient soul, the intellectual soul, and the spiritual soul, and that these correspond to the physical, the astral and the etheric body. Once launched, these abstract concepts are free to perform the most complicated manœuvres.

When a great thinker employs an abstract idea, he gives it meaning by keeping it in constant relation with common things and ordinary experience. He does not allow two or more abstract ideas to break loose from their moorings and manœuvre on their own. Christ compared the kingdom of heaven to a lost sixpence, to a thief in the night; he did not discuss its relation to the Spirit, or to God or to Man.

Goethe has no use for mystification, and the man who said "Man is born not to solve the problems of the universe, but to seek where the problem lies, and then to remain within the frontiers of what can be understood," presents an awkward problem to Steiner, who appreciates Goethe's greatness. He therefore places Goethe at the peak of the last, the intellectual epoch, whereas Steiner is the prophet of the millennial, the spiritual epoch.

Because thought which passes from a narrator to an audience takes a different form from thought which can be taken from the printed page in the privacy of one's own room, we cannot infer that the human spirit was in an entirely different phase at the time of Homer and at the present day. Before the invention of printing, books had to be carried in the memory. It would not be easy to commit Proust to memory, and the absence of any

Proust-like author from the ancient world does not justify us in inferring that the feelings of Monsieur Swann would have woken no echo in the heart of a cultured Babylonian.

I have little space left to explain why I enjoyed Miss Faulkner Jones's book so much in spite of Steiner, who is perhaps an unconscious nom-de-plume to a critic's modesty. She has a delicate understanding of Wordsworth and other English nature poets, and observes how rarely, compared with the Germans, they use the word Nature, for they are concerned with individual beautiful objects. When she comes to Tennyson, she has to explain his merits in terms of Steiner concepts; but she introduces us to Chaucer and Wordsworth and Keats in just the way which might kindle the first love of literature in a young person into whose hands this book might fall.

BRIAN LUNN.

Mr. Maugham as Biographer

DON FERNANDO. By W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM. (Heinemann, 8s. 6d. net.)

MR. MAUGHAM'S failure to write the novel for which this book provides the background will be regretted by some of his admirers. Others will enjoy the background more than any story that could have emerged from it. The majority will not concern themselves over the question at all, but will relish " Don Fernando " as much as anything else the author might have written. For whatever we receive, Mr. Maugham always makes us truly thankful. He is the only novelist of to-day who is read with real pleasure by people who are usually bored by novels, and he is the only living writer of travel-books whose excursions are thoroughly appreciated by those who would rather have the toothache than be tortured by accounts of other people's travels. Mr. Maugham himself is so interesting that his characters, his journeys, his reflections are equally interesting. To read him is an experience. The people and places in his books are people we have met and places we have known; they haunt the memory. He has written one of the three greatest love-stories in the language, the most convincing portrait of a genius in English fiction, and the best satirical novel of his age. His latest work proves that he could, if he wished, write a first-rate biography and (though this we have known for a long time) a superb autobiography.

Cervantes, El Greco, Lope de Vega, St. Teresa and St. Ignatius

are among those who appear in "Don Fernando," and their characters and achievements are summarized with a wit that does not sting, an admiration that does not gush. One or two specimens of Mr. Maugham's biographical method must be given. Concerning the internal struggle which preceded Ignatius Loyola's conversion to chastity, we are told that the people about him "must indeed have guessed that something very odd was going on, for when the young soldier finally made up his mind to follow in the footsteps of Jesus the house was rocked with a great crash and the stout stone wall was split through its entire thickness." On his journey to Monserrat, Ignatius fell in with a Moor who denied that the Virgin Mary had retained her virginity *after* the birth of Jesus. Ignatius "did all he could to undeceive him, but, such was his knavishness, he would not listen to reason." The Moor rode on, leaving Ignatius much perplexed; "he could not decide whether his faith, and Christian charity, did not demand that he should pursue the fellow and stab him to the death for his audacity."

Nothing could be better than the pages on Cervantes, whose biographers have funked the fact that the creator of Don Quixote lived on what are usually called "the immoral earnings" of his sisters and daughter. Had he been a member of an armament ring or brought about a financial crisis or helped to precipitate a war or 'cornered' a necessary commodity, or in any other highly respectable way caused murder and misery on a vast scale, his biographers would have experienced no qualms.

Mr. Maugham is quite right in saying that an exaggerated stress is usually laid on the sexual life of a famous artist, and there can be no doubt that the amours of Shelley and Byron had little bearing on their art. But the loves of Keats and Hazlitt support an opposite view, to which we must add the intensely personal experience which produced *Othello* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. Presumably Mr. Maugham is thinking of Shakespeare when he remarks: "If it were not for the perplexing sonnets I should say that the homosexual can never reach the supreme heights of genius." But apart from the overwhelming evidence provided by the plays, the sonnets are quite clearly the poems of a normal man. Sonnet 20, usually cited as evidence to the contrary, settles the question beyond a doubt. Or does a homosexualist feel "defeated" when a man is not a woman?

HESKETH PEARSON.

A Vicar Amongst the Daffodils

"Thirty Years at St. Hilary." By Bernard Walke. (Methuen. 10s. 6d. net.)

From the above I cull the following: "I remember being told how Annie Walke's sister happening to call at the artists' colour shop in the King's Road, said to the lady behind the counter, "Isn't it dreadful? My sister is going to marry a curate." "Well," said the lady at the colour shop, "that's not so bad. If a curate can put up with an artist, surely an artist ought to be able to put up with a curate!" It occurred to neither that the curate might perhaps be an artist too. That such he was, "Twenty Years At St. Hilary" abundantly proves. Mr. Walke possesses the poet's gift of seeing beauty in what to the majority appears merely commonplace. He reveals himself as a humanist who observes human nature sympathetically, a humorist, who never flinches from life at its grimmest and, when at his best, as the master, of a style so genial, mellow, and homespun that while reading his book, I found my thoughts wandering more than once to the prose of Henry VIII's martyred Chancellor, St. Thomas More.

"A farmer at St. Hilary will go out of a morning and know that the time has come for spring ploughing. He will need no calendar to remind him of the day of the month. The spring has touched him, as it will reach wine laid up for years in deep cellars away from the sunlight; like the wine that becomes cloudy at its approach, he will respond to the touch and, before the dew is off the grass, the plough will cut the first furrow of the year."

Here is a farcical anecdote of a white donkey which Mr. Walke purchased from gipsies.

"He really was a stupid donkey. One morning he came into the house by the steps leading from the garden, and found himself in a passage with a flight of stairs to the hall; fearing to walk down the stairs and being unable to turn and go back the way he came, he sat down with his back against the lavatory door. There he sat and brayed, not once or twice but continuously —disposing of the theory that a donkey can only bray with its tail in the air. The noise was deafening and most disconcerting, as we had some people for lunch, and conversation was impossible while the whole house vibrated with his braying; it was also most inconvenient that he should have chosen to sit with his back against the door of the lavatory."

The creature was ultimately ejected by the combined efforts of host, hostess, and guests.

Short extracts can give but a slender idea of the variety of scene which this book presents. One is made to feel that in these remote corners, life may be lived heroically, although obscurely and almost unobserved. Only an Englishman could have written this book, and few could write it so well. Better twenty years of St. Hilary with this wise companion, than the Grand Tour with some button-holeing bore!

KENNETH HARE.

Fiction

WE, THE ACCUSED. By ERNEST RAYMOND. Cassell. 8s. 6d.
JOBBER SKALD. By JOHN COWPER POWYS. Bodley Head. 8s. 6d.
THE NUN AND THE BANDIT. By E. L. GRANT WATSON. Cresset Press. 7s. 6d.
THE ROYALISTS. By KARL FEDERN. Translated by ERIC SUTTON. Secker. 7s. 6d.
THEY LIVED: A BRONTE NOVEL. By E. THORNTON COOK. Murray. 7s. 6d.

MR. ERNEST RAYMOND, who likes a big canvas and much detail, has chosen a painful subject for his new long book. The story, which is carefully constructed, describes an average ineffectual, disappointed schoolmaster in Islington who, emotionally starved in a late marriage, suffers by degrees a disintegration of his conscience and out of a sense of stifled hopelessness is led to commit a capital crime. The rest of the book describes, stage by stage, the sequel, familiar enough in the newspapers, of a suspected, a hunted, an arrested man, his experiences before a coroner, on remand, in court, in prison, in the condemned cell, on his way to the scaffold, and the execution itself. The story can be given without being given away because it offers no surprises or mysteries. On the contrary, its aim is convincing description: that exasperation, temptation, offence, and the uttermost sequel may be detailed from the criminal's point of view. People do these things, endure these things, every year. Let us see, says Mr. Raymond in effect, how it is with *them*, for we know it must be very different to themselves from what it is to excited and unimaginative newspaper-readers. The book, which holds the reader, is no apology for crime, no hasty transference of sympathy from a victim to a fugitive from justice. Were it written in the first person, it would amount to a statement of the motives and

the consequences, from the point of view, however, of all the chief participants. By the time these words appear, it will be a big success. On the quality of this success a word or two may be added. While successfully taking the reader out of himself and telling him much he does not know about police and kindred procedure, it could have been shortened without loss. The author's temptation is to pile up detail that is not significant. He often catalogues when a poet would evoke. The characters may err on the side of being types, but on the whole, the hero, his devoted mistress, the doctor, are realized beings; and the best device in the story is the chance that sets gossip at work, and the malice that turns gossip into investigation. The man, it is true, is convicted on circumstantial evidence only, and more might have been made of that in the trial. But the real moral of the story, which I think is unintended, is that the man, like most of his readers, has absolutely nothing to restrain him but a vague dread of the consequences. He suffers the widespread delusion that we are meant to be gratified in this world. It never occurs to him that, on the contrary, we are meant to suffer in order to prove what (if any) degree of nobility we may have. The woman is cast for that part, but only by way of contrast, and the book would have been much deeper if some sense of the universal truth, the obvious mystery, that Myra is made to embody had been allowed to penetrate the story as a whole. As it is, Myra shrinks to the position of a lovable woman, and that which is eternal and lovable but has no necessary connection with woman, is obscured.

Whether Mr. J. C. Powys has this power is a matter worth discussing. It is not so easily decided as many, I know, believe. His new enormous book, having no unity of narrative, is beyond summary. It concerns a large group of people living in a south-west seaside town. Each is introduced as if each was to be the hero or heroine. Each local landmark is described as if each was to be the centre of the setting. Each character has only to recall something when that something is elaborately explored. The unflagging probe of the author's mind never rests, but in the end it is *his* mind that finds in all these things a thousand facets of refraction, not the people or the places that reflect themselves in it. In other words, if you are interested in this mind, everything that jerks it into activity will fascinate you, but if you look for a picture of men and things in it, you will find little beyond distortions of its own queer face. Skald is not

so immense as the description of him. Lucinda is not so terrifying as the description of her. Jerry is a clown, because he is so labelled; and the odd thing is that, though the characters from rich Cattistock to Gipsy May and mad Zed, are said to belong to different classes, they all appear to move in the same circle, to live the same life—the Powys life verging on nightmare. Mr. Powys suffers from over-concentration, illustrating Blake's remark: "I can look at a knot in a piece of wood until I am frightened at it." The feverish activity that drives him is a baffled search for poise. His many admirers, however, will find "Jobber Skald" as characteristic as anything he writes is fated to be. But is the odd, however enormous, not radically smaller than the simple?

What beyond morbid interest can rape hold for anyone? Mr. Grant Watson's story is of a nun and a little girl kidnapped in the Australian Bush, and of the nun's consent, under threat of outrage to the child, to the man's demands. There is a certain attempt to make this credible, but the suspicion that a revolting theme is the real interest is confirmed by the nun's final "elation" at the prospect of becoming a mother. That will not wash, and the subject must go down the sink reserved for slops.

"The Royalists" is a conscientious but uninspiring historical romance of the Vendée, with the lovers, of course, on opposite sides. If these adjectives, including conscientious, are given their dues, this historian's first essay in historical fiction to be translated can be judged fairly.

We may be thankful that Mrs. Thornton Cook's "Brontë Novel" is not strictly a novel at all. It is extremely readable, for we are all interested in the lives of the Brontës, and this keeps close to the facts, admits gaps and abrupt transitions such as biography imposes, while interspersing innocuous conversations that give the appearance of the pages a fictional air. No new element of plot is introduced, no new "interpretation" offered. The authoress has no case to plead or theory to air, and those who are fascinated by the family should find it as pleasant as I have. Whether people who read only novels will find it to their taste is more doubtful.

OSBERT BURDETT.

Brougham

LORD BROUGHTON. By G. T. GARRATT. (Macmillan. 15s.)

OUR feeling for reformers is rather like our feeling for dentists. We accept their services because we know that they do us good, but we never feel inclined to celebrate their virtues. When a biographer scans the procession of the centuries, he is seldom attracted by the reformer as a subject for it is a sad fact that the men who break the Ten Commandments provide more engaging material to the writer than those who diligently keep them. Mr. G. T. Garratt agrees, in his life of Lord Brougham, that English historians " have not been over-kind to the reformer," and that he is too often " considered as the harmless necessary drudge . . . a drab, uninteresting figure " compared with " the jaunty defender of indefensible abuses." Mr. Garratt then proceeds to awaken our interest in Lord Brougham, of whom we seem to know very little. We find his record of good works so impressive that we wonder why it is that he has never been the subject of a full length biography before. We are told that he " touched and transformed English Society at many points . . . he broke the old Whig family system and laid the foundation of Liberalism. As a lawyer he successfully defended Queen Caroline, and, upon one occasion, he saved Leigh Hunt from prison." He " revised our whole legal procedure, helped to abolish slavery and to pass the Reform Bill." " He gave England her first cheap educational literature and her first infant schools. He was the principal founder of London University." The record of even these virtues might make dull reading if it were not that Mr. Garratt has shown also the touch of the rascal in Brougham, and the changes of fortune which came, inevitably, to a man who " disobeyed the first rule for those who would become famous in politics or literature. . . . He was incurably versatile."

Mr. Garratt is a writer with many axes of his own to grind. Whether it is a fault to allow their sound to intrude so obviously is no doubt a matter for the author himself to decide, but one sometimes feels that he has made too many asides of his own, thus disturbing the interesting unfolding of Brougham's study. But the story never ceases to be enthralling for a moment, even when we are not convinced by Mr. Garratt's championing. There was some reason why Brougham failed to be a great man. To say that his reforms alone made him unpopular is not enough, and we turn to Lord Melbourne's letter, sent to Brougham, and find much to explain why all his talents were negated by a character

which kept him back from real achievement. Lord Melbourne wrote to him in February of 1835 in answer to a " very long, very multifarious letter," " I will . . . tell you fairly that, in my opinion, you domineered too much, you interfered too much with other Departments, you encroached upon the province of Prime Minister, you worked, as I believe, with the Press in a manner unbecoming the dignity of your station. . . ." Even in these liberal days these would be crimes to prevent any politician from becoming a statesman. Whatever faults and touches of rascality there were in Brougham, they combine with the story of his achievement to make the subject of an uncommonly good biography, and although one likes Brougham no better at the end of the book than at the beginning, one enjoys the sensation of finding " pleasure and instruction hand in hand " : living through the political and social life of his time, in a narrative written with the liveliness of a good novel.

HECTOR BOLITHO.

Scarlatti

A BACKGROUND FOR DOMENICO SCARLATTI. SACHEVERELL SITWELL. (Faber and Faber. 5s.)

THOSE who open Mr. Sitwell's book in the hope of finding the results of new research into Domenico Scarlatti's life and personality will be disappointed. The Love of Scarlatti of which we hear so much in this little book has not been sufficient to inspire Mr. Sitwell to consult more than the most obvious works of reference and the generous knowledge of Professor Dent; not even has it provoked him to work through the collected edition of Scarlatti's harpsichord works, a task before which, as he ingenuously informs us " the most enthusiastic admirer would quail."

In default of anything like hard work Mr. Sitwell has given us a very charming amateurish sketch of the countries and the Courts with which Scarlatti would have come into contact, and has been able to indulge to the full his hobby of " regretting the Bourbons." For those who have no difficulty in following Mr. Sitwell's style and deciding which of the three subjects of one sentence forms the subject of the next, and who are prepared to overlook such mistakes as " Castrati " used in the singular not once but several times, the book is very readable. But it is very irritating that the first book on one of the composers who is the most important and the most suggestive to musicians of the

present day should not do more to elucidate the character and the attraction of a man who remains as impersonal as Canaletto. Except for his friendship with that strange forgotten genius Thomas Rosengrave, who produced his opera "Narcisso" in London and edited some of his harpsichords, there is nothing in Scarlatti's life that illuminates him as a man.

All through the history of music since his day Scarlatti has been appreciated by such men as Burney, Crotch, Handel, Schumann, Moscheles, Brahms, Bartod, Falla, Casella, and perhaps Beethoven, though the appreciation of some of these must have been hampered by the strange temporary eclipse of the Harpsichord without which much of Scarlatti's work sounds sterile. Now, however, that we have such miraculous interpreters of his work as Mrs. Woodhouse and Mme. Landowska (who has just issued some fine recordings unfortunately unobtainable in England until the Autumn) we have a chance of again realizing that wonderful virtuosity which had, as its author avowed, the sole intention of pleasing the only sense of which music is the object.

Early in the XIXth century Crotch says of his music "There is a third style of music very different from the Sublime and the Beautiful; its characteristics are playfulness of melody, broken and varied measure, intricacy of harmony and modulation, and a perpetual endeavour to excite surprise in the mind of the auditor. This style, which has not yet obtained a name, is analogous to the Picturesque in Painting; and I shall distinguish it by the term Ornamental, which, however, is not so appropriate as I could wish." This description still seems far more valid than any of Mr. Sitwell's airy generalisations though both have missed what is perhaps the outstanding characteristic of Scarlatti's music, its extraordinary tautness of rhythm and form, which is unparalelled in any composer until we come to the later works of Falla, a confessed devotee.

VERE PILKINGTON.

Humbert Wolfe at Oberammergau

X AT OBERAMMERGAU. By HUMBERT WOLFE. (Methuen. 5s.)

MR. H. W. GARROD once gave a lecture while he was professor of poetry at Oxford which is chiefly remembered for the statement in it that to find the equal of the vogue enjoyed on publication

by Mr. Wolfe's poem *Requiem* " you will perhaps be driven back to that morning of February, 1812, when Byron 'awoke and found himself famous.'" Whether or not the statement exaggerated, Mr. Wolfe is not likely to come near rivalling the success of Byron now. For one thing, it is a number of years since *Requiem* appeared. Our enthusiasm has had time to cool, and a cooled enthusiasm is not easily rekindled. For another thing Mr. Wolfe has now attempted something more ambitious than *Requiem*, something very ambitious indeed. And, as the story of Icarus survives to warn us, it is when you try to fly high that your wings most readily reveal their weakness.

Not that Mr. Wolfe fails here to be up to the minute of the fashion. On the contrary, " X at Oberammergau " illustrates the difference between emotion and excitation that there is such a strong tendency at present to ignore. Set beside the symphony orchestra of Milton or Wordsworth the string quartet of John Donne, or the solo instrument of the lyric Keats or the lyric Shelley, Mr. Wolfe's muse is heard to operate a jazz-band. A piece of contemporary dance music is often based on a truly moving phrase, and here and there in this poem, if we overlook false rhymes, we may find poetic lines :—

> He did not ask nor plead, but the great quiet
> He brought with him flew upward through the riot.

But just as our dance music seeks its broad effect through metallic resonances, persistent repetition, and the tom-tom beat—all sounds that play on the nerves rather than on the feelings—so " X. at Oberammergau " is for the most part not poetry moving the body and soul of the reader, but verbal jugglery that tickles his cortex.

Fashion ordains that at the moment British poems must display snatches of the gift of tongues, and here obediently are a few words of Hebrew and some passages in German and in French. How appropriate that is in itself need not be discussed, but it is worth noticing that the French contains a repeated mistake. The French do not say, as they are made more than once to say here, " Le Jésus-Christ." They say either " le Christ " or " Jésus-Christ " without the article. The slip is typical of the defect of the poem. It is after the same manner that Mr. Wolfe's similes again and again miss their point by a hair's breadth through being what can only be called purely cerebral. " The perfume catches—crisp as a biscuit—at your throat "—that is more neat than apt.

And it is with the whole as with the parts. The argument is that Jesus Himself turns up at Oberammergau to fill the leading role in the Passion Play when the appointed actor has fallen ill, and that the Nazi Commissioner responsible for the production having surprised Him talking to a Jewish prostitute, decides He is a Jew and arranges to have Him at the first performance crucified in earnest. The taste that accepts such a notion is doubtless open to being defended as well as questioned, but there can be no debate that when analysed the notion proves to be self-contained. Development from it is nowhere possible. It will not carry beyond itself. That is to say, it is recalcitrant to being invested with the transcendent significance Mr. Wolfe evidently hoped to give to it.

MONTGOMERY BELGION.

A Vade-Mecum for Fishermen

THE ANGLERS WEEK END BOOK. By ERIC TAVERNER and JOHN C. MOORE. (Seeley Service & Co.)

MR. ERIC TAVERNER and Mr. John Moore know all that there is to know about fishing. By the time the reader has finished "The Anglers Week End Book" (Seeley Service & Co.) there will be very little of which he is ignorant. It is a mine of information. It not only tells you all that there is to be told about fisherman's birds, flowers, flies and weeds, but how to run a fisherman's inn, how to cook your fish, how to manage a boat on sea, loch, or river and even how to avoid being sick in a coracle! Over two hundred of its five hundred pages contain an anthology of prose and verse by studying which you may "see the way the Fisherman doth take" to quote John Bunyan. It is a peaceful road and clean and no one who comes humbly and stands "where the bright waters meet" can ever be a lost soul.

A list of the terms employed in game fishing makes pleasant reading. Here, if you are ignorant of such terms you may learn what lovely things are "culver keyes," where "curly jukes" are to be found, and wherein lies the difference between a fairy and a kelpie. In addition to a glossary of coarse fishing and sea fishing terms and the names of fresh water fish, these indefatigable authors have collected the names of angling writers and their works, fishermen's nom de plume, a "Who's Who" of anglers and fly dressers, a list of angling periodicals, dictionaries of angling terms in English-German, French and English-

Norwegian. Not content with this they give records of every imaginable kind of fish. It might be thought that this had exhausted their activities: but no. One of the chapters to which the fisherman will most frequently turn is headed "Useful Knowledge." The amount of information packed into twenty pages is astonishing. You are told all about gut and how it is made; the best type of cast to use for various kinds of fishing; how to make up a cast; line diameters; how to free your line if caught in a snag or tree; how to measure a fish; how to tell a salmon's life history from the study of its scales; how to pack a fish for travelling; even how to dye feathers for fly tying. If your tastes be in the direction of poaching there is a chapter on law the study of which will enlighten you as to just how far you may allow your predilections to lead you with impunity. The chapter entitled "Thoughts" is really supplementary to "Useful Knowledge," extremely practical and spiced with humour. The experienced fisherman will read it with delight and the novice with profit.

There is only one omission. The late Ernest Briggs, author of "Art and Angling in Scotland," who painted running water with the brush of genius is not mentioned. There are some attractive woodcuts by Margot Hamand and it only remains to say that no one who spends 8s. 6d. on this delightful volume will ever regret it.

FRANK WALLACE

The English Countryside

VILLAGE ENGLAND. By SIR W. BEACH THOMAS. (MacLehose, 8s. 6d.)

No one, I think, will wish to quarrel with the author over this book, save in the matter of its title. "Village England," though there is seemingly an undercurrent dealing with a particular village, deals mainly with the natural history of the countryside, the England of bird and beast and flower and weed rather than with the England of the village. However, having criticized its title, let me hasten to praise its contents.

The book is written in calendar form, each month forming the basis for a pleasant discursive talk. The author is obviously a country-lover, and more obviously a naturalist—result, he carried a note book during his wooing. For his material he ranges far and wide over the British Isles with a most "seeing" eye; and even on occasions wanders further afield. Yet it is all done with such an

innate grace and ease of style that those who are not naturalists must sense the attraction.

Descriptions of actual village life, that is of the doings of the inhabitants, are, though rather subordinated to happenings in animal life, very happily treated; and where character sketches are given it is with breadth and humanity of spirit. The recent innovations in farming practice are dealt with in the same tolerant mood, and specially noticeable are the account of the New Farm with its mechanical equipment and the Vanished Sheaf. Indeed, even when writing of practices such as the use of the toothed trap, which he abhors, the author makes his protest the more effectively because in such restrained language.

In one slight matter, however, he does lay himself open to reproach. In " February " the reader is led to suppose that after a lapse of years the old village mill has been restarted; and in sympathy with the author he rejoices. In " June," however, the same mill appears, but now it has been silent for years and its wheels will revolve no more. My own opinion, based purely on hope, is that the first passage was written after the second, and that the mill wheel is merrily revolving. Nevertheless, from this apparent conflict of statements, doubts must arise.

Apart from this puzzle and possibly a rather too lavish use of quotations here is an eminently pleasant readable book which will appeal to everyone who has ever lived—actually lived and not week-ended—in the countryside. No doubt Sir W. Beach Thomas had some particular district in his mind as he wrote, but to the reader as he reads the countryside of his own thoughts will appear before him. That presumably was the intention of " Village England," and by that standard it is successful. A word is necessary about the illustrations. All are excellent, but two worthy of special mention are the photo-engravures of " Tern alighting at Nest " which forms the frontispiece, and " Garden Warbler at Nest."

But the greatest merit of the book can best be pointed out by quoting from page 140, on which the author remarks, " You do not want ' boss words ' in an immortal lyric, where rhythm, rhyme, and sense and sound half reveal and half conceal the inner glory—." The words quoted here are, it is true, used in a particular connection; but their spirit animates the whole book from cover to cover. As a result there is a total absence of those tawdry and meretricious flights which too often are thought necessary in a description of the English countryside. For which

relief here one countryman registers his grateful thanks, and recommends this book to others.

A. G. STREET.

Planning

PLEASURES OF PLANNING. By I. M. HOROBIN, M.P. (Macmillan & Co. 4s. 6d. net.)

MR. HOROBIN seems to have taken over the activities of Sir Ernest Benn, who has recently been rather silent; but like Mr. Hartley Withers, Mr. Horobin is quite as lucid as Sir Ernest Benn and his style is more concise. There must be many scattered individuals who see red when they meet with the word "planning," which has become little more than a catchword in applying some new form of imbecile interference with the working of economic principles which are, after all, in the last resort, based on human nature. Our Victorian ancestors refused to listen to Ruskin's economic theories; but these theories were sane and rational compared with the woolly nonsense which is now popular at almost any political meeting.

Mr. Horobin takes, perhaps, too charitable a view of what is going on; but there is undoubtedly evidence that human nature being what it is, many people are making money under the most hypocritical pretences of social welfare. Are we to suppose, for instance, that no borough councillor ever has any private interest in some new demolition scheme which forces a number of people to evacuate well-built cottages and houses which could easily be repaired and to live in gincrack flats in a locality which puts them to grave inconvenience? The decisions of the county courts in these matters shed a disagreeable light on the apparent philanthropy of bureaucracy with the result that the House of Commons has already abolished the right of appeal against bureaucracy. However, even if there is more method in this modern madness than Mr. Horobin suspects, he has written an excellent little book which ought to be placarded all over the country and which is fortunately being read in the House of Commons. He is not much surprised at the effects of economic nationalism and social disorder. "You might as well think it surprising that your home was disorganized, when the cook was waiting in the kitchen and the butcher boy was outside with the joint; but you had persuaded the cook to lock the kitchen door

from the highest motives of patriotism, and the butcher boy was whiling away the time parading up and down the street, so busy being class-conscious that he had no time to be conscious of the claims either of his employer or his customer."

Mr. Horobin insists that all social and industrial prosperity reposes on the producer being able to guess to some extent what the consumer is likely to want. This, however, is now becoming impossible owing to the interference of ignorant politicians. "Nowadays you have to make (*a*) something that a politician tells you to make, (*b*) something that he tells someone else to lend the money for, because no one is prepared to pay for it himself. Sooner or later he can't borrow any more and the pool goes bust and the market with it, or else he gets the sack or a new brainwave or makes a bargain with some other nuisance in another country; and you have to alter all your plans at a moment's notice in the intervals of being told how badly you manage your job, and how well he will manage it for you if you don't do what he tells you to-day (which is always the opposite of what he told you yesterday)." E. S. P. HAYNES.

The Torrington Diaries

THE TORRINGTON DIARIES of the HON. JOHN BYNG, edited by C. BRUYN ANDREWS, Vol. II. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 18s.

THE second volume of the rural rides of John Byng will be welcomed as a record of the transitional England in the last years of the eighteenth century, when, in the industrial Midlands, the "rural cot" was giving place to "the lofty red mill" and the simple peasant was being transformed into what he calls the "impudent mechanic."

The author, who was born in 1742, was descended from a family with military and naval traditions; his grandfather was admiral, his father, Colonel of the footguards. He also served in the army from 1760 to 1780, succeeded his brother as Lord Torrington in 1812, and died in the following year. There is little trace of his military experiences in his diary, except one passage where he writes that he "had often played Captain Plume himself"—a reference to Farquhar's "Recruiting Officer."

Byng was not an able man, nor even a competent antiquary. He dismisses Staunton Harold as "a glaring, lately-built house" and Easton Neston as "a great staring, unpleasant dwelling." His travel diaries record, as he confesses, the most trivial

occurrences to refresh his mind on a distant perusal, and he speaks of himself as an old-fashioned fellow, one who " studies only little things."

He had a passion for the past and a nose for antiquities. He rode abroad in the summer, carrying a couple of sheets wrapped up in a pair of sheets, and putting up at small inns, whose bills he carefully preserved. Like his contemporary, Horace Walpole, his taste ran to Gothic, and the chapel at Clumber found no favour with him because there was " no awful gloom." At the sight of a ruin he feels like a fox-hunter at the unkennelling of a fox, and he even notes the existence at Tideswell in Derbyshire of the " maiden garlands " hanging in the church to commemorate the unwed. His diaries were not intended for publication, but in 1791 he looks forward to their existence at the end of two centuries, when he assumes that there will be little " curious " surviving in this well-explored country.

He was naturally no friend to change. He was bewildered by the silk mills at Cromford, and like that greater rural rider, Cobbett, disliked the increasing Wen, the metropolis. In his journeys in the Midlands, Bedfordshire and Lincolnshire between 1789 and 1791 he sees with regret the desertion of the country by the country families. " Since the increase of luxury and turnpike roads, and that all gentlemen have gout and all ladies have bile, it has been found necesssary to fly to the Bath and to sea bathing for relief, whilst the old mansion being deserted, and no longer the seat of hospitality is left to tumble down."

He speaks as plainly about enclosures as the Hammonds. Speed is his bugbear; and, born at a time when turnpike roads were few and bad, he believed that an " influx of vice " was caused by the quick and easy communications. " A gentleman (he says) walks to his pleasure, a blackguard hurries to his folly." He believed in 1791 that speed had reached its summit and his puzzled ghost may even now be calculating the proportionate increase of vice.

John Byng's simplicities and crochets make him an engaging travelling companion. His diaries are " trimmed " with decorative headpieces and water-colour sketches of his favourite ruins and remains. Here and there his comments are arresting, as when he compares the dark satanic cotton-mill at Cromford (which looked " most luminously beautiful when lighted up upon a dark night ") to a first-rate man-of-war. M. J.

Club Gossip

By Quid Nunc

THE King and Queen will deserve their holidays and some restful enjoyment after the many strenuous engagements of the Jubilee Year. Few people realize the strain of these great public ceremonies and reviews. No President of any great Company, nor Administrator of big business or political affairs has as hard a task to fulfil as falls to the King, and this year it has been trebly hard. Ably assisted as His Majesty is by the Royal Family, still it is the King's Presence which counts, and many a time at great personal strain the King has been present at a ceremony rather than disappoint any of his subjects. When the King is at Cowes the rest he enjoys most will be on the Royal yacht. There is a sense of repose at sea in fine weather comparable to that of no other holiday scene. Even then the European situation will give anxiety to both the King and his Ministers. War in Abyssinia might easily unloose "the dogs of war" elsewhere. If Italy seeks a final decision by arms with Abyssinia—though the issue is not in doubt—the campaign may be one of great hardship and heavy losses, and what Italy seeks to gain may not be worth the purchase price. Moreover, quite apart from Europe, the sympathy of the many coloured tribes in Africa and Asia will be with Abyssinia, right or wrong. This feature of the situation is apt to be overlooked. The Abyssinia when Napier of Magdala invaded the country, and the Abyssinia of to-day are two different matters.

With all the panoply of war being prepared in Italian Somaliland and Eritræa and elsewhere, it will perhaps attract more attention than usual to our Army field training, which will be in full swing in the Counties of Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Sussex for the greater part of the Home Forces. Of our five Expeditionary Force Divisions, four of them will be in these Southern Counties, the 5th Division training by itself in Yorkshire. Army training has been woefully neglected since 1925, and carried out only on most meagre lines. This year there is to be an attempt to make up the leeway, and the Training of 1935 will be marked by the presence of mechanized formations on an appreciable scale for the first time.

And while our troops are training, the public Guard duties at the Royal Palaces and the Bank will be undertaken by the Royal Marines. There is no finer body of men in the Navy or Army than the Marines, for although under the Admiralty the marine is also a soldier even more than a sailor. On parade it is doubtful whether he has any equal, even in the Brigade of Guards, and there will be large crowds to see the Marines at the Changing of the Guard.

* * *

IT should not be necessary to stress the importance of every wage-earner in the world giving his or her contribution to the British Empire Cancer Campaign. What a wonderful thing it would be for the Empire if the cure of this world scourge came by the work of a British scientist. His name would go down to posterity in the annals of every nation. We have had men like the late Lord Lister, who probably by his inventions in antiseptic surgery has saved more lives than any

other human being ever born, or like Simpson whose invention of chloroform has saved millions of people from suffering great pain. But great as these men were and other famous scientists who have been responsible for the march of knowledge in the treatment of various human ills, the man who produces the cancer cure will have earned greater honour, and I should imagine a statue in his memory would be erected in every city in the world. No honour would be too great.

* * *

WELL, to use Lord Moynihan's words—and his Lordship is one of our greatest surgeons—" the sun never sets upon the battle against cancer, a battle unceasing, unwearied, indomitable," and he adds, " after an attack at full pressure for ten years, our War Chest has become sadly depleted." Let us, therefore, give, give gladly, give generously. Let us share in the efforts to relieve countless brethren who suffer, and those unborn, who may suffer, if no cure be found in this generation. Lord Moynihan says : " The Empire not long ago, to its eternal glory, withstood an enemy seeking to destroy us. Cancer is infinitely more formidable, more deadly, more relentless, the most deadly hateful foe of all the races of men." What wonder, then, that the King and Queen head the list of helpers; but the wonder is there are so many millions of workers who give nothing. The Campaign wants the pennies as much as the pounds. It wants the sympathy and help of every right-minded man and woman.

* * *

I WISH I could say more. The Archbishop of York has said, " we may well pray that He, the Lord and Life-giver, will guide those who are seeking, by scientific research to find the means of curing and preventing this plague." Only too necessary that our faith in the great effort be quickened. And our beloved King has asked " for the closest co-operation between all arms of our forces and for the most efficient staff-work." This costs money. The annual expenditure is between £20,000 and £30,000. There is no reserve, for every penny goes into the fight. So, whip out your cheque books, or put your hands into your pocket and send the Secretary, British Empire Cancer Campaign, 12, Grosvenor Crescent, what you feel you really must send.

* * *

THE value of Edwards' British-made-Gut on tennis rackets can be best appreciated by recent results achieved at Wimbledon. Both the finalists in the Ladies' singles, one finalist in the Men's singles, and the winning finalists in the Men's doubles, at Wimbledon, used strings manufactured by the famous firm of Charles Edwards and Son, of Turnmill Street, E.C.1, and of Leicester, Reading, Barnstaple, and Annan N.B. Tennis enthusiasts, whether buying a new racket or having their rackets re-strung, should insist on Edwards' gut; it is the finest grade English sheep-gut procurable. Whether for Tennis, Badminton, and Racquets it has no peer, and there are special grades for Hard Courts and Grass Courts. This firm has been in business over 300 years, one of the oldest trading firms in the City.

* * *

THE recent hot weather has made evening tea more popular than ever as a social custom of importance, and tea late in the evening is so refreshing a to take the place of iced drinks or those of a stronger nature. Indeed, iced tea properly served, is delicious. I can recall a very distinguished Indian Mutiny hero—the late General Lucien Jerome, V.C., C.B.—who, in his day—he lived at Bath—was famous for the skill he showed in making tea. Many well-known hostesses were quite content to let him officiate instead of their cooks. And he was always the presiding spirit of the final farewell to the guests with tea, claiming that its digestive qualities at that time of day counteracted any indiscretions of diet at the dining-table. Tea is now drunk very often at bridge parties, as well as supper dances, a sure sign of cultured popularity.

* * *

THE great growth of new houses around London has been responsible for some spectacular expansion of the Building Societies. One of these, a quite small Company in 1915, the Magnet Building Society, had then a share capital of only £96,159, and assets of £130,503. To-day, those figures, the result of the careful and efficient management of Mr. James Bancroft, the Managing Director, are share capital £2,203,967, and assets £2,686,825. Mr. Bancroft tells me there is no slackening in the demand for financial help in regard to house ownership—an Englishman's house, however small, is his castle. The Magnet Society pays 3½ per cent. Tax Free dividend, equivalent to £4 10s. 4d. for each £100 invested, a good return these days. Mr. Bancroft's hobby is bees. I wonder if his bees have, amid their multitudinous activities, a Bee Building Society for their wondrous cells!

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SEASIDE—(*continued*).

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SEASIDE—(*continued*).

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SEASIDE—(*continued*).

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